

**BARRIERS TO LANGUAGE LEARNING
A STUDY OF THE RETIRED
BRITISH COMMUNITY ON THE
COSTA DEL SOL, SPAIN**

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Abstract

Tourism to Spain is a significant part of the Spanish economy especially on the southern coastal areas which attracts a huge number of foreign tourists, in particular, a large number of British. Over the years many have chosen this area as their permanent or semi-permanent home and thus creating pockets of English speaking communities along the coast. This is evidenced by the presence of the many English owned and operated businesses coupled with the fact that there is a high number of Spanish who speak English. On the surface the communities appear to be economically self-supporting and socially independent of their Spanish hosts so perhaps it should be of little surprise that there is a low level of Spanish language uptake in these communities. Quite clearly the “need” has been removed and so the majority of people seem to struggle to string a basic sentence together.

The basis of this thesis is research into the community of British seasonal tourists with particular emphasis on integration through language learning. The target group is a defined demographic of retirees who spend approximately six months over the Northern European winter period in Spain. They still have their own home in the UK and do not call Spain home. Their level of language uptake is very low. Language is a fundamental part of our own social identity and culture and is a significant factor in integration. Therefore in order to understand why there appears to have been little uptake of Spanish language learning by this group, it is important to look at the elements that may have had an influence on their decision making process. Learning another language, particularly for older people, can prove to be challenging if not extremely difficult. Initially the barriers are identified as being age, financial situation, lack of encouragement from spouses or peers and lack of self-confidence.

Glossary

English

British / English	Term used interchangeably and refers to English speaking people and not solely English nationality.
Community	The residents of the area of study and also refers to the English speaking community and the Spanish speaking community.
EU	European Union
Ex-pat	Shortened version of ex-patriot.
IRM	International Retirement Migration
Migrant	A person who changes their country or residence permanently or for long periods of one year or more.
Northern Europeans	General term used to describe nationals of countries in the geographic area above France and Italy.
OAP	“Old Age Pensioners” – British term for people over the retirement age.
Resident Tourists	Those tourists who take long holidays of six months or more but do not consider themselves resident in the destination country. They still keep a house in their native country and do not call the destination country “home”.
Seasonal Tourist	Retirees who spend up to six months of the year (usually in the winter months) in another country but are not considered “residents”.

Spanish

Inter-cambio	Conversation lessons with exchange of language.
La Costa	“the coast” as in Costa del Sol. Used to refer to the general coastal and beach area.
La Pensionista	Also called <i>Hogar de Mayores</i> (old peoples centre).
Los Jubilados	Spanish term to refer to retired people.
Oficina de Ayuntamiento	“local council office” shortened to <i>el Ayuntamiento</i>
Padrón	Spanish register of foreign residents.

Foreword

This research has been inspired by to some extent by my own knowledge of the area through many visits to this and other parts of Spain. Many years ago, my first ever visit to Spain took me to the snow in the mountains of the *Sierra Nevada* and then to the shores of the *Costa del Sol*. Since then I have visited many times as the tourist and spent a short period as a resident and during that time I learnt the language, immersed myself in the culture and had Spanish friends. It is therefore somewhat quizzical and to some point annoying in my view that people can visit the same place for 10, 15 or even 20 years and still not speak any of the language nor be involved in its culture or its people. It acknowledged that there are factors that affect this decision making process which has promoted my interest. My own parents are some of those people who spend the Northern European winter months in Southern Spain but do not speak the language. My last visit to Spain was to spend some time with my parents in their own little enclave that they have been visiting for the last 15 plus years and they now spend six months of the year, the Northern Hemisphere winter, in *Arroyo* and they are not alone nor are they unusual. There are thousands of British old age pensioners (OAP's) doing the same thing. It has been a place for many as a welcome respite from the British winter, the cold, the damp and the high winter power bills. Their knowledge of Spanish appears to vary from nil to only a little. Any basic knowledge consists only of standard greetings, numbers, adjectives and nouns, the odd phrase but nothing much more than four or five words together at once. It was therefore something of shock to me to find that they had spent so much time in a foreign country yet would struggle if they were asked a question and could not hold a brief or simple conversation. Like most of their friends, their attitude to the Spanish was not rude, but almost apologetic because they were not able to communicate properly.

It is this demographic of the community that will be the target group for the research on this thesis. Integration appears to be only a surface level so it is therefore the intention of this thesis to look behind the curtain and try and answer some questions as to why and how this situation continues to exist. There will be no direct intention to arrive at a definitive conclusion but more to develop a deeper understanding of the workings of this community and try to understand the apparent reluctance or restrictions they have in learning the language. It must be stressed that this community is not unique. There are similar communities on the islands of Majorca and Minorca but are supported by the German tourist or seasonal tourist.

Chapter One

1.1 Introduction and Background

The English have always been travellers but they are not great adventurers. Even in the halcyon days of the Victorian “Grand Tour” of Europe the so called adventurous British tourist only ventured to relatively “safe” places, staying in cities and towns with English guides, staying at English run hotels and rarely venturing too far away from the safety of their own tour group. The requirement for them to enter into conversation with a “local” would have been minimal and when necessary would rely on the linguistic ability of their own guide. A “foreign language” was often only for the educated or the artistic and definitely not for the average person. The expansion of the use of the English language was, without doubt, as accelerated by colonialism. But even considering the English mono-linguist and “colonial” attitude to their European neighbours it is still something of a surprise to learn that in this modern age there exist large English speaking communities in foreign countries such as the one under study where very few speak anything of the local language at all.

Without a doubt Britain is now one of the most multicultural societies in the world yet it still appears to lag behind the rest in the language league compared to its EU cousins. British cities in particular have grown to accommodate migrants from various ethnic backgrounds who continue to celebrate their own language and culture whilst blending into the fabric of normal British every day life. The country has large groupings of migrants from the Indian Sub-continent, the West Indies and Africa to such a concentration in some areas that English is only spoken by the migrants when necessary. British public opinion on these large migrant communities is mixed but there is a certain amount of tolerance as long as there are no problems. Acceptance of these large concentrated groups is achieved by how much they integrate and those sections of the migrant communities that do not integrate are regarded as “different” and not considered as adding value to British society. Further, acceptance is judged by how “different” migrants are and in this case “different” would be “not European”. There are other large communities albeit less concentrated in other large cities in Britain such as the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities in North London but these communities are less obvious simply because they are not classed as “different”. Another factor of these migrant communities that would distinguish itself as different from the ex-pat community in Spain is that migration was for work or to join other family members. Their Spanish ex-pat

counterparts are retirees and migrated not for work but to retire and being close to family is not essential to their wellbeing.

So why then do the British follow the same pattern as foreign migrants in their own country and settle in concentrated areas and have limited integration? If this is not acceptable to them in their own country why should it be acceptable for another host country? Is it that because they are European they do not class themselves, nor are seen by the Spanish, as falling into the category of “different”? Maybe the tolerance and acceptance of so many different cultures in their own country has made the British resilient to the attitudes of their Spanish hosts. If someone can move to Britain and continue with their normal life then why should it be a problem for the British to do the same in another country? This is an issue that will be used as an example for comparison to the community in Spain in relation to attitudes and tolerance when discussing integration.

Regardless of the multicultural make-up of Britain it is still a mono-linguistic society supported only by the mere fact that English has become an internationally accepted language in many areas and in particularly commerce. A monolingual society remains so until there is another language strong enough to influence a shift to a bi-lingual or multi-lingual society. For example, there has been significant influence of the Spanish language in the USA brought about by the number of South American immigrants (illegal or otherwise). This change in language culture now means that many parts of the USA are in effect bi-lingual. The reason that a migrant language has not challenged English in Britain is probably to do with the dominance of the English language through its past colonial presence and the resilience of the British to refuse to move aside and let another language invade. This was demonstrated many years ago by the long fight by Welsh and Scottish nationalists and problems they encountered trying to have their own national languages recognised as official languages of Britain and to be taught in their schools. The struggle for those languages to be accepted as official and for communities to be recognised as bi-lingual was a strike against English superiority. To relinquish the dominance of English within certain sectors of the country was a major effort and challenge to national pride. It will be quite understandable that a language from a “foreign land” would stand no chance of breaking into British society and challenging the dominance of English in the public domain. It may be argued that there is always a need to introduce more linguistic diversity through education and learning and perhaps none more evident than under the European banner but there is also the school of thought that promotes “language

maintenance” or what some would call linguistic nationalism.¹ There is perhaps none more demonstrative of this linguistic nationalism than that of the English. If the dominance of the English language in colonised countries is a form of linguistic nationalism, therefore, on this basis is the *Costa del Sol* becoming a type of modern British colony? Or from an internal perspective is the community creating its own sub-culture and ethnic grouping thereby excluding others to become a type of ghetto?

There is reference throughout this study to “Northern Europeans” who are defined as those nationals of Member States of the EU in the geographic area above France and Italy. Generally, this includes (but is not limited to) British, German, Swiss, Dutch, Danish and Scandinavians. East European countries are not usually included in this category as they do not seem to feature in such volume as compared their Northern European counterparts. However the term “Northern European” is used liberally and is not an exclusive definition. In addition, the terms “British” or “English” are used interchangeably and will in most cases refer to English speaking people and not solely English nationality. The term “community” will also be used to refer to the area of study in the *Costa del Sol* and this will also be in reference to both the English speaking community and the Spanish speaking community. There are many other nationalities residing the area of study but will not be included in this study.

The initial hypothesis for this study is that there are a number of complex issues that affect the communities involved and their attitudes to integration through language learning. Questions on barriers to learning reveal that factors such as age, availability, cost and confidence are recurring themes from the respondents and these main issues are considered to be essential to impact of learning a language or not as the case may be. Further, and what is considered to be the essential part of the hypothesis is that the “need” to speak any Spanish has been removed and this “need” is an essential part of any function in society. If a “need” is removed then society will adapt to the point that the “need” is no longer recognised as important. A contemporary example could be that in our modern technological world the “need” to carry cash has diminished and so we have adapted and in fact now find it inconvenient having to use cash rather than electronic transactions. The metaphor may not be exactly comparable but the example of how this can affect the day to day existence is the same. With regards to the

¹ B S Turner, ed. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2006). 322.

community under study, the “need” to speak Spanish in order to exist no longer has a noticeable detrimental effect on the well being of the individual. The removal of this “need” is a complex issue and it is hard to pinpoint any one fundamental cause and likewise there does not appear to be one solution. In order to try and formulate a good hypothesis from the information obtained a number of questions were considered and applied to the research. Questions were formulated to encourage discussion on the subject of language learning and to examine the attitude of both parts of the community.

Now here is the conundrum. The seasonal tourists of the target group do not speak Spanish because the locals speak English. If these tourists were in a minority would the Spanish speak less English and would the tourists be encouraged to learn Spanish? The problem is that the seasonal tourists of the target group have no need to learn the language to get by on a day to day basis. It would therefore be reasonable to assume that if the locals didn’t speak English then this would probably have a direct consequence on the levels of tourists from Britain. Considering that one of the main reasons that this part of Spain has developed into a tourist and retirement area for the British is that English is spoken and the “need” to speak Spanish has been removed. The dilemma is whether the Spaniards speak English because of the tourists or that the tourists go to this part of Spain because the locals speak English? One can assume that these days the latter is definitely the fact that the locals speak English. The next question is then should this be challenged and changes forced on the participants or should it be left at the status quo?

This area in particular has a few dormitory settlements occupied by foreigners most of which are English speaking and the Spaniards tend to live in their own areas and very few in the tourist areas. Similarly in reverse, few foreigners live in the Spanish dominated areas but tend to congregated in certain central areas. Because of this division in residential areas the day to day requirement for the permanent residents to speak Spanish is greatly reduced. As a result and because of this fact there are many businesses which exist and profit from the lack of integration. The nature and structure of both the Spanish and the English communities is so interwoven economically that it would be wrong to introduce something that would upset the balance. So many businesses and livelihoods rely on the English speaking community and consequently both communities now rely on those businesses either as a customer or as employee. There is a constant dependency on each other to such an extent that if one area should fail or disappear the other would most certainly falter. There are a large number of

British owned and run businesses some more successful than others and there are also a number of Spaniards also running businesses to service the English speaking market. In addition, these businesses either employ Spaniards or use Spanish suppliers and services in order to maintain operation. As a result an intricate web of inter-related links between the English run businesses and the local economy has developed and again an unnecessary change in one of the many cogs in the process may upset the balance. So, hypothetically, if the two communities were more integrated socially and linguistically there would also be a change on the structure of the local economy. It follows that a shift to greater integration and less reliance on other English speakers would seriously affect the balance of power and consequently reduces the presence of English speaking services. The question is therefore should that balance of power be adjusted and if so would the presumed ensuing changes be a good or a bad thing?

There are now apparently reports of some attitude differences arising from those in the Spanish community that deals directly with the British and their presence in Spain. Although some of this attitude is directed at the more permanent and longer term resident it is all in relation to what level of integration they are prepared to commit to. The fact that language is extricable linked with the success of integration and that this has not been a necessary requirement before we can question the reasoning for the attitude differences. For instance, would the Spaniards welcome the requirement for English and development of language learning? Considering that the Spanish community in this area relies heavily on the British community for work and so income there may be some reluctance for their English visitors to learn because they would no longer be dependant on those services they are currently restricted to?

The seasonal tourists particularly repeat that there is not the availability of affordable lessons or opportunities to practice what they have learned. However, if availability of lessons was increased would attendance increase accordingly? If they were given the opportunity to learn the language would they take it up? In addition, would the Spanish community be willing to assist with this language integration? Bearing this in mind it what would be the effects on the reliance on English speaking services?

1.2 Structure of the Study

Considering the above factors and theories, the purpose of this research is to look at the English speaking seasonal tourist who spends the Northern winter months in this part of Spain. The study was undertaken in three parts – theory and fact building, empirical study in Spain and the third stage to assess and discuss the findings.

The first stage has been to build facts and the theory. This involves a brief discussion on the area and a brief history of the political and geographical area. Further topics include the development of this area as part of the International Retirement Migration (IRM), the people involved and looking at theories on the levels of language integration by looking at data, information and literature already available. There has been extensive research and comment by many European academics on IRM to this area of Spain and how there has been direct effects on social welfare and wellbeing. Only current available literature that has direct connection with the British retirees and settlement in the southern part of Spain has been reviewed. In particular studies by Ackers and Dwyer, Casado-Diaz, Warnes, King and Williams² (among others) are considered as valuable resources for both theoretical study and opinion and definitive empirical studies. Most of the previous studies tended to focus on the more permanent resident to the area whereas this research is directed at the Seasonal Tourist being those that only spend part of the year away from home. O'Reilly's book *The British on the Costa del Sol* was also helpful in providing some background information albeit from the perspective of the permanent British ex-pat to this area, but nonetheless it was another contributor from which to springboard other theories and concepts.³ Further theoretical discussion on counter-cultures, good society and the dominance of the English language are all relevant to this topic and used to try and explain the functioning of the community.

The second part was by way of an empirical research in Spain through a series of unstructured interviews with a selection of the target group and this was completed in October 2010. It

² L Ackers and P Dwyer, "Fixed Laws, Fluid Lives: The Citizenship Status of Post-Retirement Migrants in the European Union," *Ageing & Society* 24 (2004) ; M A Casado-Diaz, C Kaiser, and A Warnes, "Northern European Retired Residents in Nine Southern European Areas: Characteristics, Motivations and Adjustment " *Ageing & Society* 24 (2004) ; R King, A Warnes, and A Williams, *Sunset Lives : British Retirement Migration to the Mediterranean* (Oxford: Berg, 2000); A Warnes, "The International Dispersal of Pensioners from Affluent Countries," *International Journal of Population Geography* 7, no. 5 (2000) ; A Williams et al., "Tourism and International Retirement Migration: New Forms of an Old Relationship in Southern Europe," *Tourism Geographies* 2 (2000) .

³ K O'Reilly, *The British on the Costa Del Sol: Transnational Identities and Local Communities* (London Routledge, 2000)

was decided that due to the age demographic of the target group that an unstructured interview set up almost as a “chat” would produce more honest opinion than a questionnaire. Essentially each person was guided on the subject matter and although there are guiding questions they are not definite so as to try and obtain a good spread of opinion and feedback. The results of the interviews were collated and analysed and used to compare and contrast to the pre-determined theories. The recruited participants are all members of the community under study. They all fall into the category of ‘seasonal tourist’ and spend approximately half of the year in this area.

There was also opportunity to discuss these questions with members of the business community – rental agents, restaurant and bar owners and language teachers. Most of those approached were willing to offer some opinion on the subject and although the interviews were also unstructured they all followed similar lines. Furthermore, there was a number of “chance” meetings and small conversations that occurred especially in shops and cafes. These comments were often part of the pleasantries or friendly chat on passing the time of day but the content of which also provided an insight particularly to the general feel towards language integration and the seasonal tourist. General observation is a key element to any empirical research and this was achieved during the short period of the visit to Spain. Observations are included in this work and contribute greatly to the discussion. Newspapers in many languages are readily available all over the *Costa del Sol* with many of them being free. The available English language newspapers of the area were reviewed for articles on integration and language learning and the classified section of some of the newspapers provided an insight into the supply and cost of language lessons. All the newspapers provided excellent information for the seasonal tourist but are aimed primarily at the population of full time resident ex-pats rather than the seasonal tourists. There were also a few free Spanish newspapers for the area which were reviewed in the same context.

This research has been approved by the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee and was conducted in accordance with the University guidelines. All participants were advised of the subject matter and that all information, including identities, would be treated as confidential. Further, all participants were advised that the completed work would be available for public viewing through the University website. The resulting analysis has been framed so as not to intentionally identify any one person and in some reports the situation or scenario is changed in order to maintain that element of trust.

The third and final stage was to assess and discuss suggestions and possible solutions (if any) as a result of the theory development and the empirical research. It will also be important to look at the barriers to learning for older people and what (if anything) should be done to change the current situation. It is not envisaged to arrive at a definitive outcome or straight answer to this research question as an initial hypothesis is that it may not be a problem and therefore does not need solving. What is more important is to examine, analyse, evaluate and develop a thorough a better understanding of the community, language and how they interact with their hosts.

1.3 *International Retirement Migration (IRM)*

Europe has an ageing population. Over the last century or so Europe has seen a distinct decrease in fertility rates resulting in eventual top heavy population with the oldest at the top and the young at the bottom. The population pyramids for Western European populations demonstrate the changes in our aging population showing that if it were not for external immigration into certain Member States in recent decades European population would probably be at an even more dangerous level than it is now. As fertility rates drop the result is that more than ever there are increasing numbers of “old” or retired people. For the last century or so, as infant fatality rates have dropped and the development of medicine has helped with prevention of disease and illness, families have no longer had need to produce so many children. This low fertility rate is due to the widespread acceptance, and use of, contraceptive development brought on by the modern desire to achieve a better “quality of life” and improved opportunities for both men and women.⁴ Each decade produces less young people than its predecessor and each decade now produces more 60 year olds than the previous one. It is estimated that this top heavy ageing population will reach its peak by about 2040 as the children of the 1970’s reach their seventh decade.⁵

The main cause for concern about an increasing ageing population is the provision of health care, pension and general social welfare. However, as our population ages another phenomenon occurs because many retirees these days have more money than did their parents. Home ownership particularly in Britain is higher than it has ever been in this age group and

⁴ A Warnes et al., "The Diversity and Welfare of Older Migrants in Europe," *Ageing & Society* 24 (2004) , 308.

⁵ A Warnes, "Divided Responses to an Ageing Population: Apocalyptic Demography Ideology and Rational Social Administration," in *Divided Europe: Society and Territory*, ed. R Hudson and A M Williams (London Sage Publications Ltd, 1995), 232.

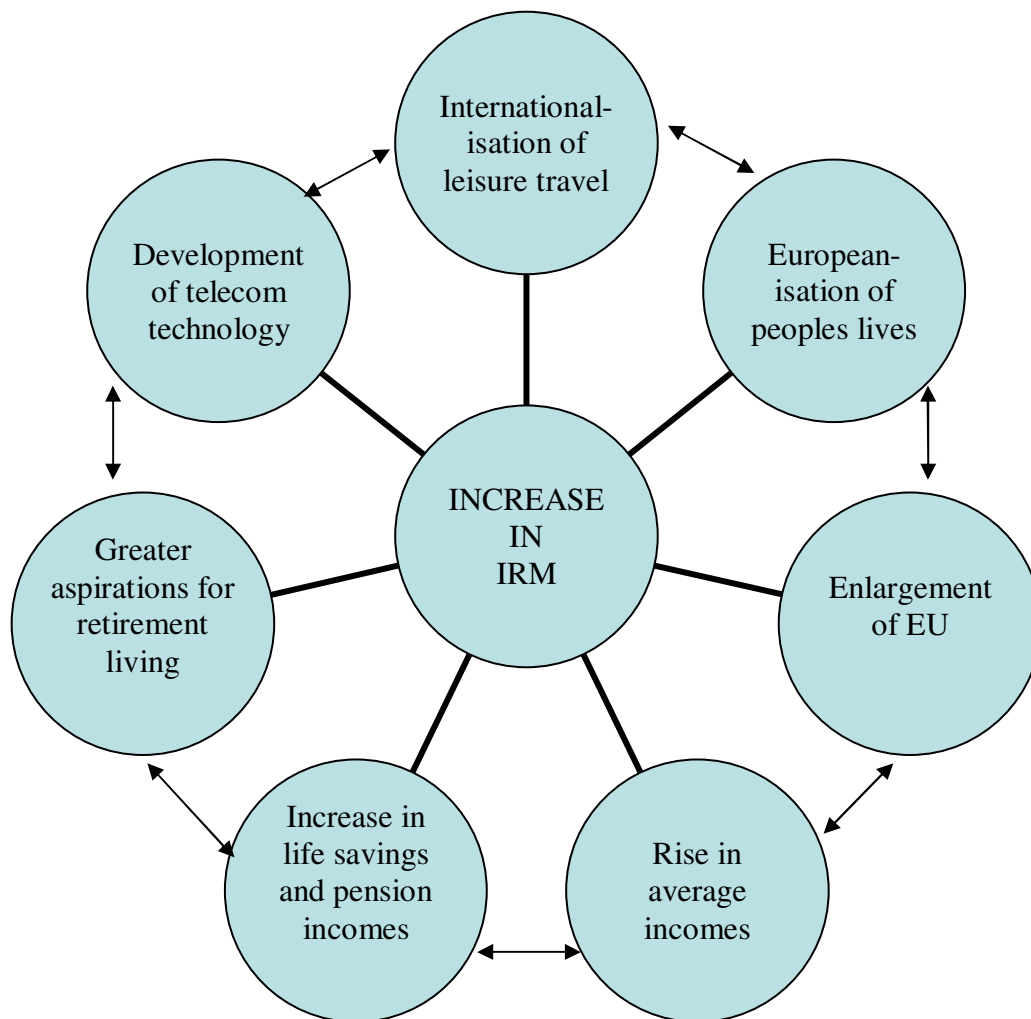
older people now have either (or both) State or private pensions. As a result, the older generation now have increased asset ownership such as property and shares and many have savings. Fifty years ago, an average retiree in Britain would have relied solely on any meagre savings and be dependant on the state pension to survive. Old age was not considered to be fruitful for the average working class OAP and it was only the lucky who inherited or the fortunate who had been provided for. In addition, since WWII traditional roles for the working classes have changed as even typical working class jobs such as factory work, building and coal mining have paid increasingly better wages and private pensions have become available for everyone. With smaller families, both husband and wife bringing two salaries into the household and the benefit of a state and private pension, this has produced better long term benefits for old age. However, although old age no longer implies poverty, the demand of this sector of the population is creating problems for the balance of the working population which is not big enough to support their parents and grandparents. This responsibility then falls back on to the State sector to provide the necessary support and care but many Governments are not able or are not prepared to foot the bill.⁶

The complexity of what has driven the increase in IRM in recent decades is shown in Figure 1. The factors shown are all interconnecting and occur as a result of one or more of the other factors and each factor co-exist as a result of the existence of the others. One factor removed from the equation would render the others incapable of function or be at the very least restrictive in some way. For example, the removal of “Enlargement of the EU” would have an effect on the rate of travel due to border restrictions and harmonisation of the welfare systems so resulting in the possible reduction in the level of aspiration for overseas retirement living. However, the enlargement of the EU in 2004 and 2007 probably did not have any bearing on the decision making process for IRM as the countries involved in these enlargements were not in the Southern Member State area. There has been IRM to the Southern Member States for many years regardless of the removal of borders or the introduction of other EU linked benefits. Likewise, the removal of the “Rise in average incomes” would have significant effect on savings and pension income because these are as a direct result of better wages and so disposable income. Therefore, aspirations for retirement and subsequently affordability of travel would be tempered to fit in with the availability of funds to the individual. The availability of income, savings and pension could therefore be

⁶ Ibid , 235.

considered the most influential driving force on this theory.⁷ Essentially, availability of money affects choice and the less money the retirees have available to them will affect their choice of retirement destination. There are other deeper issues that may also have a contributing effect so it is stressed that this is not a definitive diagram but designed to be used to assist visually.

Figure 1- Diagram showing connecting factors for the increase in IRM



Increase in incomes and pensions over the last few decades has being a direct contributor to the increase in the Europeanisation of many retirees' lives and is also a significant if not pivotal driver for the “amenity-seeking” migration from the North to the South in Europe. Further, the enlargement of the EU has led to the harmonisation of democratic, civic and legal

⁷ See Warnes et al., "The Diversity and Welfare of Older Migrants in Europe," Diagram developed using the factors discussed on this topic but is author's own interpretation.

frameworks, which has made living in another EU country easier.⁸ For example being able to obtain healthcare through the *European Health Insurance Card* and the development of the Schengen Zone has made travel within the EU easier for its citizens.

The retirees of today form a new socio-economic grouping and have managed to break the trend of previous generations with regard to money and lifestyle options. More than ever before these retirees are now able to choose to spend their winters in warmer climes. Spain has been one of the main areas to attract this group and this is reflected in the strong growth in the numbers of Northern European retirement residents in the last two decades.⁹ Recent research on IRM has shown that this growth can be attributed to spreading affluence and increased home ownership as previously discussed. Early retirement and increased life expectancy together with higher levels of education means that changes in life course is achievable. More importantly the increase in faster and cheaper international travel and the spread of telecommunications has changed the implications of being away from home for an extended period.¹⁰ Spain is not the only country that has experienced this change in IRM as most of the southern areas of Europe particularly the Mediterranean countries have all experienced similar growth. Often the choice of country in which to spend their retirement is dictated by previous holiday experiences. Those areas favoured by retirees and have a high IRM rate are either in “mass” tourist zones or very close by and this seems to emphasise the importance of previous holidays in making a choice.¹¹

There are two types of settlement that occur from IRM; the first model is where migrants choose to live in the wider community usually in more rural areas and where they integrate into local society. This group is more integrated, speak the local language to a better level of proficiency and tend to almost purposely avoid connection with other members of the same expatriate communities. The migrant in this model will be more independent, linguistically more able (or willing) and prefers local friends in their social grouping rather than their own nationality. The second model is the “expatriate enclave” which is “socially and geographically isolated from the surrounding host community and bearing a remarkable similarity to the tourist enclave”. The isolation reduces any potential conflict in linguistic and

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Casado-Diaz, Kaiser, and Warnes, "Northern European Retired Residents in Nine Southern European Areas: Characteristics, Motivations and Adjustment " , 354.

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Ibid , 355.

cultural differences that may arise through interaction with their host community.¹² This latter model is typified by the area of Spain under study and by the heavy concentration of specific nationalities. Both these models have very different implications for the host communities and for the migrants themselves as they will be most definitely from different socio-economic and educational backgrounds.

Assessment of the impact of IRM on the migrants and their host communities is done through taking three factors into consideration, namely:

1. the highly polarised concentration of migrants in a small number of locations;
2. The socially selective nature of the migrants and the economic;
3. Social and cultural characteristics of the destinations.¹³

One of the main reasons that most retirees are attracted to the Southern European area is simply for a better climate, particularly in the Northern winter months. The numerous outdoor activities for the retirees are evidence that the lifestyle benefits of a warmer climate with no high winter power bills back in Britain has more than have the normal social benefits but also has obvious financial advantages. The cost of living has, until very recently, been a major factor in making the decision to spend the winter months in Spain. This however has changed as the cost of living in Spain has gradually increased and the recent drop in the value of Sterling against the Euro has now become a significant factor but financial changes do not completely deter the ardent seasonal tourist from returning to their “second home” every year. Another attraction is the availability of, and access to, a good healthcare and welfare system. By virtue of Articles 17 to 22 of the Treaty establishing the European Community (“the Treaty”) all nationals of the EU are “Citizens of the European Union”. This therefore means that all Citizens of the EU are entitled to certain social and political rights. Article 17 of the Treaty sets out the basis of European Citizenship in that:

1. Citizenship of the Union is hereby established. Every person holding the nationality of a member state shall be a Citizen of the Union.
2. Citizens of the Union enjoy the rights conferred by this treaty and shall be subject to the duties imposed thereby.

¹² A Williams, R King, and T Warnes, "A Place in the Sun: International Retirement Migration from Northern to Southern Europe," *European Urban and Regional Studies* 4, no. 2 (1997) .

¹³ Ibid

Article 18 of the Treaty states that, “every citizen of the Union shall have the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States”. These rights enable a large sector of the retired population of the EU to migrate to another Member State for part of the year and still enjoy the benefits of their own state such as continuing to draw their pension whilst away.¹⁴ Further, the social rights of the individual also extend to health care which is a vital aspect in the aging population with each Member State of the EU providing its own level of State healthcare for its own nationals. There is not one single over-riding EU healthcare system per se as the EU is not a single entity in this regard but an EU Citizen can link into the national healthcare system in their host country. This is made possible through the non-discrimination principle in Article 12 of the Treaty. Under this principle the host Member State has an obligation to treat other EU Citizens in the same way as its own nationals.¹⁵ There are limitations to this principle and restrictions on whether the EU Citizen is a “qualifying” person, however these restrictions are associated with workers and other migrants and retirees tend to fall outside this category and so qualify. The *European Health Insurance Card* (free of charge) replaces the old E111 form and ensures that every EU citizen has the same access to public sector health care as the nationals of the country they are visiting.¹⁶ This availability and access to the local health system is now a crucial factor in the choice of host country for retired migrants. The cost of health and travel insurance for travel outside the EU for the elderly tourists can be financially prohibitive therefore internal EU travel with the additional comfort of the *EU Health Insurance Card* is a much more attractive option. The general consensus of opinion regarding the treatment and facilities available for the tourists receives excellent reviews from the target group of respondents in this study. When they first arrive at the beginning of the winter they have to register with the local clinic and the hospital. The current system enables the medical staff to have access to their medical records and continue to provide medication (if needed) in accordance with the instructions on their UK medical files. Essentially it is piece of mind particularly amongst the older tourist population.

¹⁴ Ackers and Dwyer, "Fixed Laws, Fluid Lives: The Citizenship Status of Post-Retirement Migrants in the European Union," , 451.

¹⁵ Ibid , 452.

¹⁶ www.ec.europa.eu/social/main.

Chapter Two

2.1 *The Development of Southern Spain as a Retirement Destination*

Spain is a Mediterranean country, bordered on the west by Portugal, the north by France and in the south and east by the Mediterranean Sea. It is an area of land known as the Iberian Peninsula and has a rich history and strong cultural identity. After the end of the Spanish Civil War in 1939 through to 1975 the country was under the fascist rule of General Franco.¹⁷ Restrictions under the Franco regime were hard with the regulation of information and ‘foreign’ influence strongly controlled. Strangely though, Franco encouraged tourism, as he saw that it was a way that the country could capitalise on the growing international tourist market and bring in much needed foreign investment to support the national economy. In those early days Spain was still a relatively safe and cheap haven for the adventurous and artistic types of the 1960’s and 1970’s but mass tourism had not yet arrived. In the same year that Franco died (1975) the country reverted to rule of the existing royal dynasty of Borbón and the current monarch King Juan Carlos I was appointed to the throne.¹⁸ The Spanish Royal family is highly regarded by their subjects and in return have proven to be strong representatives of their people. However even in 1975 by comparison to its Northern European neighbours, Spain was still a “backward” country with peasant subsistence farming and a weak currency on the international market. Spain became a member of the European Union in 1986, is a part of the Schengen Zone and joined the Eurozone in 2002.

The Franco regime positively encouraged this development of the tourist areas as the opportunity to be on the receiving end of tourist dollars was obviously not to be missed. In a move somewhat contrary to the philosophy of his own regime Franco encouraged foreign investment and tourism. Perhaps he, Franco, realised that the relatively poor Spanish economy could not continue as it was and the country would not be able to keep pace with

¹⁷ Francisco Franco, in full Francisco Paulino Hermenegildo Teódulo Franco Bahamonde, by name El Caudillo (“The Leader”) (1892 - 1975, Madrid), general and leader of the Nationalist forces that overthrew the Spanish democratic republic in the Spanish Civil War (1936–39); thereafter he was the head of the government of Spain until 1973 and head of state until his death on 4 November 1975. Encyclopædia Britannica, "General Franco," <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/216925/Francisco-Franco>.

¹⁸ Juan Carlos I, in full Juan Carlos Alfonso Víctor María de Borbón y Borbón (b. Jan. 5, 1938, Rome, Italy), king of Spain from Nov. 22, 1975. He acceded to the Spanish throne two days after the death of Francisco Franco. Juan Carlos was instrumental in Spain’s peaceful transition to democracy. His role as King started in 1975 as a transition during Franco’s illness. Encyclopædia Britannica, "King Juan Carlos of Spain," <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306959/Juan-Carlos>.

European progress. The way forward therefore was to capitalise on increasing demand for Mediterranean holidays. The added attraction to the new tourist was the low value on the international exchange markets of the Spanish Peseta. Spain had at that time a relatively low cost of living as compared to many Northern European countries. Always looking for a bargain, the British tourists could not resist the temptation of the value for their British Pound, lots of sun and sandy beaches and as a result, the *Costa del Sol* was never to be the same again.

In the 1970's the area began to metamorphose from the idyllic fishing villages with white-washed houses (*las casas blancas*) to the tourist attraction that it is today. With the advent of cheap international travel for the masses and the introduction of package holidays to hotter climates with cheap accommodation, food and entertainment all for the family Spain became a popular and affordable choice. A definitive combination of factors contributed to this change, particularly: large scale hotel construction on the main coastal areas; the introduction of cheaper air travel and the deregulation of airline operators in the UK. But the three most important factors that attracted the tourists were the weather, cheaper cost of living and (most importantly) no need to speak Spanish. Construction on the *Costa del Sol* and *Costa Blanca* in particular underwent vigorous advancement to accommodate the new expectant demand and coastal towns and villages eventually disappeared to be replaced by concrete high-rise apartment blocks and hotels.

Franco died in 1975 leaving (among other less positive things) a legacy of a landscape of high rise concrete hotels and apartment blocks and a burgeoning foreign enclave. But, and perhaps more importantly, this "corner of a foreign field that is forever England"¹⁹ that many call home at least for some of the year has now become an integral part of society and major contributor to the country's economy. Spain has now developed into a popular tourist destination particularly for Northern Europeans to such a point that tourism is a significant part of the country's economy.

The Costa del Sol

The area under study is the region to the south-east of the peninsula, known as *Andalucia*. The coastal area where tourism is most concentrated is known as the *Costa del Sol* (Coast of the Sun, or Sunshine Coast). The weather in this area is hot with summer temperatures often

¹⁹ R Brooke, "The Solider," http://www.rupertbrooke.com/poems/1914/v_the_soldier/.

exceeding 38°C and the further inland you travel the hotter it gets. The area is locally known as “*el sarté*” or the frying pan but winter on the other hand is cooler but never cold. The coastal areas of Spain enjoy a mild winter with many sunshine hours and daytime temperatures often between 15°C and 20°C. Understandably then, it is a perfect retreat for anyone fed-up with a long Northern European winters and (until recently) was also a cheaper option to staying at home. The British (with emphasis on the English) have for many years looked to this corner of the Mediterranean as a sunny bolthole from which they can escape the long grey, damp winters to revitalise their mental and physical health.



Figure 2 - Map showing Costa del Sol, Malaga area and Benalmádena

Malaga Province has the most concentrated proportion of the population of foreigners. Although there are no definitive and official statistics on British citizens living abroad, in 2006, the Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR) published a report “*Brits abroad. Mapping the scale and nature of British Emigration.*” The report estimates that 5.5 million UK citizens live abroad with a further 500,000 living abroad for at least part of the year.²⁰ However, the figures are distorted and do not allow for the numbers of seasonal tourists who now spend long periods in another country but do not fall into the category for “migrant”. The term of “migrant” is used by the United Nations for defining international long-term

²⁰ Office for National Statistics, “*International Migration – Migrants Entering or Leaving the United Kingdom, England and Wales,*”(2005) The figures in the report were based mainly on data from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on UK passports issued abroad. This was supplemented by data from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) on the number of state pensions being paid to UK citizens with an overseas address.

migrant “who is someone who changes his or her country of usual residence for a period of at least a year so ²¹that the country of destination effectively becomes the country of usual residence”. ²² The report also states that international migration is “the most difficult component of population change to estimate.”²³ The newspaper clipping shown in Figure 3 reports that the Spanish National Institute for Statistics calculate that total foreign residents has grown from 5.7 percent in 2000 to 16.8 per cent in 2010. These figures include Northern European nationalities such as British, German and Scandinavian who have settled in this area after retirement. The largest concentration of foreign residents is on the coastal areas and the article noted that 32 per cent of the population in *Benalmádena* are residents.²⁴



Figure 3 - "Four times more foreign residents than 10 years ago"
EuroWeekly 21-27 October 2010.

Spain has high levels of tourism and depending on the length of stay the tourists fall into different categories. The tourists who stay for long periods are generally referred to as

²¹ A M Williams, "Mass Tourism and International Tour Companies," in *Tourism in Spain, Critical Issues*, ed. M Barke (Wallingord: CAB International, 1996)

²² Office for National Statistics, "*International Migration – Migrants Entering or Leaving the United Kingdom, England and Wales*," viii.

²³ Ibid vii.

²⁴ "Four times more foreign residents than 10 years ago" EuroWeekly 21-27 October 2010.

“resident tourists”.²⁵ This term applies to those people who effectively move their home from another country to Spain for the main part of any one year but they still maintain their own house in their country of origin and do not necessarily call Spain “home”. They are also older than the normal tourist in that they are of retirement age and are also referred to as a “seasonal tourist” as this is in specific reference to elderly migrants who change habit in the winter months.²⁶ The term “seasonal tourist” will be used throughout this work to describe the target group and the respondents as they fit into the definition. There is therefore a distinct difference between this type of seasonal tourist and the generally implied short term tourist being the group of tourists that visit the area mainly in the summer for one or two weeks. This research will ignore the short term tourists as they do not fulfil the requirements for this study.



Figure 4 - Benalmádena Costa showing some of the many high rise apartments blocks and hotels. The shot is taken from Arroyo looking south down the hill onto the coast.

The area under direct study, *Arroyo del la Meil*, is located approximately eight kilometres south of *Malaga* airport slightly in from the coast at *Benalmádena Costa*. It covers an area of approximately 26.58 kilometres and has an average altitude of 280 meters above sea level. There are three distinct districts in this relatively concentrated area the first being *Benalmádena Costa* (the beach) and the second being the commercial district which is up the hill away from the beach in the area of *Arroyo del Meil*. The third area even further up into the foothills and hugging the hillside is the picturesque old town of *Benalmádena Pueblo* known to the locals as simply *el Pueblo*. The local *Oficina de Ayuntamiento* (Council Offices), or *el Ayuntamiento*, is situated at *el Pueblo* and it is the main administrative centre for the three districts. The *Costa* area is the main tourist area and has nine kilometres of

²⁵ Williams, "Mass Tourism and International Tour Companies,"

²⁶ Karen O'Reilly, *The British on the Costa Del Sol: Transnational Identities and Local Communities* (London Routledge, 2000), 61

golden sandy beaches which is a major draw for both English and Spanish alike in the hot summer. It also has a beautiful marina which was voted the best in the world by *International Property Magazine* in 1995 and is considered to be the place to see and to be seen on the *Costa del Sol*. The marina port also boasts over 1,000 moorings and 200 plus restaurants, bars and shops.²⁷ *Arroyo de la Meil (Arroyo)* means “river of honey” and sits on the hillside looking out at the Mediterranean Sea. It was originally a typical hillside village about a kilometre up the hill from the fishing village of *Benalmádena*. Now it is part of the urban sprawl that is the *Costa del Sol*, however it still has its own town centre and retains more of its Spanish character than its coastal cousin.

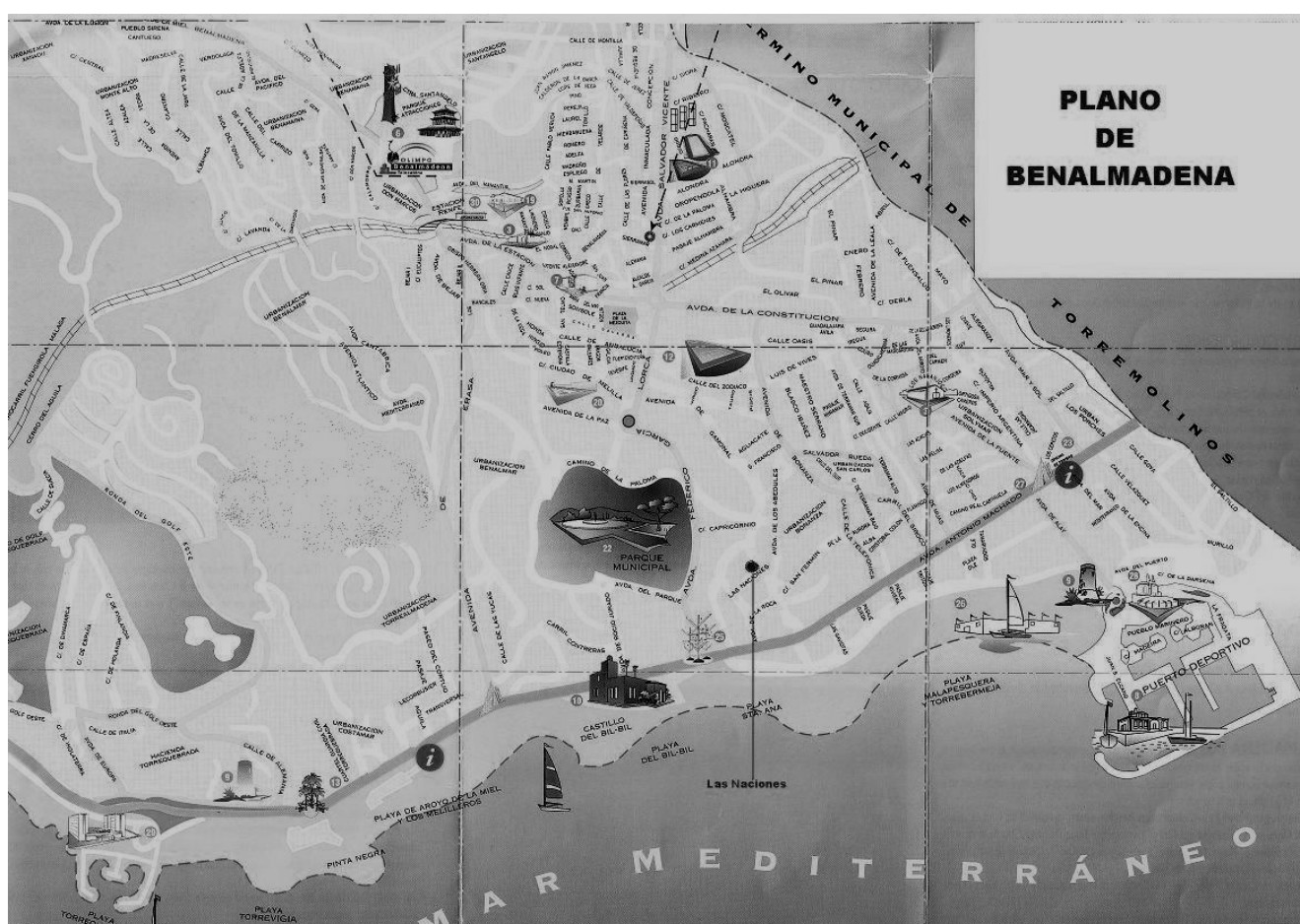


Figure 5 - Map of Benalmádena Costa showing Arroyo de la Miel (Benalmádena Pueblo (el Pueblo) is just off the map on the top left).

Malaga city itself is a fine example of modern Spanish living with a vibrant multicultural population, international business connections, excellent shopping, nightlife and numerous public facilities. *Aeropuerto Pablo Ruiz Picasso (Malaga International Airport)* is the major

²⁷ Indigo Guide Spain, "Benalmadena Spain - Holiday Travel Guide - Attractions, Vacations & Sightseeing," <http://www.indigoguide.com/spain/benalmadena.htm>.

airport for the *Costa del Sol* area and in the last few years has been undergoing huge refurbishment and development to provide first class international facilities for the traveller. Although thousands of British (and other Northern European) holidaymakers fly in and out of the airport relatively few actually spend much time in the city itself. It is probably this reason that *Malaga* seems to sit outside the rest of the *Costa del Sol* from a tourist perspective. The airports extensive arrival and departure halls are now connected with the local train service which takes the traveller right down the coast to the main tourist town of *Fuengirola*.

Connections from the airport at *Malaga* are made either by taxi or by using the rail system and because the Spanish public transport system is affordable, efficient and clean it is used to the full by both locals and tourists alike. The numbers of tourists (and locals) that use the system confirm that it is a credit to the investment that has been made in recent years through national, regional and EU funded development. This transport system is one of the many reasons that have assisted the making the decision for older seasonal tourists come to this area. Being able to get around without having drive or own a car and all its associated problems, or even not having to be concerned about renting a car also adds to the attractiveness of the area.

2.3 *The British Tourist on the Costa del Sol*

“Globalisation” is a word that can repulse as it is considered a negative word by some and one that has been the instigator of destruction of areas of the world. However, social politics aside, the stark reality is that now more than ever British people are able to afford to travel to and ultimately live in other countries. Traditionally they will tend to congregate in familiar areas, and as long as they don’t have to eat the foreign food, they readily move in and “take up their place” in a foreign country. After all weren’t the British at the helm of the colonial advance?

Frankly, on the international scale the immediate image of the *Costa del Sol* is not a particular good one. Images are of sun, sea and sand, packed beaches, rows of souvenir shops, “English” theme pubs proudly advertising English Premier League Football matches and all day full English breakfast washed down with couple of pints of John Smiths bitter. Rowdy young tourists give the area a reputation of the place to go for a week of binge drinking and casual sex. That is summer but winter is distinctly different. The thousands of OAP’s from Britain flock to this area to benefit from the warmer climes during the winter months. Not only do they have access to a good transport system and the provision of excellent public and social facilities but the seasonal tourist has the added advantage of the being able to tap into the local

healthcare system through the *European Health Insurance Card*. It is also a well acknowledged fact by the seasonal tourists themselves that by taking flight and setting up temporary home in another country is often an opportunity for many to remove themselves completely from their normal existence. For some they can even re-invent themselves amongst their new surroundings and new friends not in any way a ploy to mis-lead or try and hide their background, family or origins but for many it is a way to live a life that they have always dreamed of or they would not be able to achieve back home.

The British class system (of which some amusingly still deny even exists) reigns supreme even in a foreign land. There are essentially three types of British tourist each having names for the other. These groups are commonly known as “egg and chips”, “Marbella lot” and “the oldies”. The latter being the British retirees who for obvious reasons do not wish to be associated or compared with the other two. However, there are twists to the strata of these classes.

The coast is an English speaking tourist haven to such an extent that it would be easy to believe that you were in an English coastal seaside town if it were not for the sunshine, the Spanish *Policía* and the fact that the cars drive on the “wrong” side of the road. However, over many years of occupation there has developed a stereotype which the British themselves associate with the tourists who spend their holidays on the coast. They are known by their predictable habits of spending their holiday time going to the English pubs for their English breakfast and English pints of beer. Derogatory terms often used by their own compatriots to describe this group are “fish and chips” or “egg and chips”. This probably stems from the old joke that this type of tourist goes to Spain every year for their holidays but “don’t like and won’t eat foreign food”. This is the reason that is often cited to explain why they frequent the English establishments rather than the traditional Spanish ones.

From the viewpoint of the seasonal tourist on the bottom strata is the so-called “egg and chips” crowd as they are the holiday makers who cling to the coastline and rarely venture much away from the beachfront. Next step up (according to this reasoning) are the “Marbella lot” – the ex-pats who have made the coastal area their home on the other areas of the *Costa* such as *Marbella*, *Estepona* and down the coast to *Gibraltar*. The “Marbella lot” communities are seen as being a bit too flash with their cash and presumed ill-gotten gains. This is something of a left over from pre-EU days when many British con-men and criminals

used the Spanish *Costa* as a safe haven to escape criminal prosecution back in Britain. This group are the ones that like to show that they have money and tend to live in expensive upmarket apartment and villas. The self-perpetuating image of this group is that the men spend their time on the golf course and the women in the hair salon and boutiques with both ultimately ending their day in the upmarket English bars and restaurants of the area. They are also known as “bar-flies” due to the perceived high level of consumption of alcohol. There is plenty of money on show and plenty being spent (and whether the money is theirs or not is always an interesting topic of conversation and makes for good gossip). This behaviour is considered somewhat vulgar by ‘the Oldies’ and they consider that this group are not the sort of people they would want to mix with. Both the “egg and chips” and “Marbella lot” tend to stick to the coastal areas and rarely venture no further than 500m back from the beach area and central tourist drag.

Self-appointed at the top of this social ladder would be the “the oldies”. Not only do they look down upon the “egg and chips” for their brash ways and the “Marbella lot” for their vulgarity in a sociological sense but also geographically as they have settled further up the hillside. Obviously, the other two groups have their opinions on who is at the top and who is at the bottom and no doubt the “Marbella lot” will put the “egg and chips” and “the oldies” below them as they are considered working class. As cash is often king in their environment their poorer neighbours are not worth bothering with. The “egg and chips” crowd think both the other two groups rate themselves too highly and act above their station. They may be right but the interaction or, more significantly the lack of interaction, between the groups is an interesting sociological subject.

Ironically, all these groups come from very similar backgrounds. They are predominantly from solid working class stock and from traditional industrial working class areas in Northern Britain. The only differences would be age and opportunity. The “egg and chips” are a mixed bag ranging from young singles through to families and couples whose children have left home. The “Marbella lot” are often of similar age demographic but have taken the opportunity (and some would say risk) to leave Britain and start a new life in Spain and there are stories of success but often these are outweighed with the many more stories of failure. Then there are “the oldies” all of whom are of retirement age and ranging from mid 60’s to octogenarians and even some nonagenarians - winter in the sun obviously has benefits for longevity! Again this group are from working class backgrounds but are either receiving good

pensions from a life time of work or have some savings which they intend to spend before they die. Unlike their “Marbella lot” neighbours they tend to be more careful with their expenditure as they are on fixed incomes with no other earning power. This is not to say they do not have a good lifestyle, absolutely to the contrary! The number of groups and clubs ensure that they have an excellent social life and the well maintained public areas and accessible public transport adds to a positive feeling of well-being. Essentially, it is better living than being at home.

The groups separate themselves into their own enclaves along this stretch of the coast. The Spanish Mediterranean coast rises sharply from the sea and extensive development over the years has led to a seafront full of hotels and apartment blocks. The main road runs down through the coastal towns ending at the British outpost of Gibraltar. To the south and east of the road are the sea-front hotels, shops, bars and restaurants leading down to the beach. To the north and west of the road there is often only a single row of buildings before the land rises sharply and the side roads start to climb up into the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. This distinct geographic feature serves as an almost invisible psychological barrier between the groups of tourists. Quite literally, if you walk directly uphill, heading north and west from the coast heading inland the ratio of foreigners to Spanish changes drastically almost every 100 metres. The higher up the hill you go the fewer tourists and the more Spanish there are. Once north of the main *Arroyo* high street and into the central area of *El Pueblo* the existence of foreigners is only noticeable by their absence. Within a space of only two kilometres the tourist has practically disappeared. This does not mean that there are no tourists beyond that area but only that the density is much less and as this is a commercial and residential area for both the Spanish and the seasonal tourist and it seems to provide a comfortable mix. The lower beach front on the other hand is the main tourist economic area and businesses provide incentive to encourage the tourist to stay at the bottom of the hill and not venture too far away.

The coastal tourist development in this region was as a result of the tourist supply and demand but was further fuelled by the property boom in the 1980's which led to the demand for housing and the building of the “*urbanizaciones*”. These are areas of residential development on the outskirts of the main commercial district and were designed to provide good housing options away from the tourist area. Property developers, building companies and real estate agents have played an important role in developing the *urbanizaciones* which in turn has

attracted the settlement of many retired migrants.²⁸ In recent times, this form of development has carried the brunt of accusations from the Spanish media for the rise in property values and that these developments have contributed to the destruction of the coasts natural beauty. Issues of integration and inclusion or exclusion of the retired migrants who live in these *urbanizaciones* also arise in that there are reported higher levels marginalisation and feelings of exclusion from Spanish society. This is blamed on the actions and behaviour of both the migrants and their Spanish hosts and it is questioned whether there is any encouragement to build social relationships with their neighbours.²⁹ These areas are predominantly occupied by permanent ex-pat residents but our seasonal tourists, the group under review, live in the more local area mainly due to transport requirements. This is mainly because very few have a car and they rely on the public transport system to get around. So in a combination of convenience and necessity they live in an area that has all the amenities to hand which is also a mix of the two communities.

2.4 *Tourism and the Spanish Economy*

The effect of the growth on tourism (whether it be the two week annual holiday, the longer term seasonal tourist or the migrant) has had a huge long term positive effect on the Spanish economy and balance of payments. There is a direct correlation between the development of the popular tourist areas, the increase in economy and the level of employment rates. Any visitor to the area can see this immediately by the number of hotels, businesses and services that are evident in the main tourist area. As a result Spain has unwittingly become a symbol of mass commercial tourism the formula for which other countries have tried to replicate in order to attract tourists. Not only did the development of tourism (particularly in the *Costa del Sol*) assist with Spanish economic development and removed the reliance on subsistence living and the lowering of the cost of international tourism but it also was a contributor in removing the psychological barriers to living in a foreign country.³⁰ The development of international tour companies has been described as being a “powerful instrument shaping new economic and cultural relationships”³¹ and strong evidence of that statement is apparent in this area of Spain. It is a very simple equation that tourists spend money and that money

²⁸ Casado-Díaz, Kaiser, and Warnes, "Northern European Retired Residents in Nine Southern European Areas: Characteristics, Motivations and Adjustment " , 356.

²⁹ Ibid , 356 referring to studies by K O'Reilly, *The British on the Costa Del Sol: Transnational Identities and Local Communities* .

³⁰ M Thea Sinclair and V Bote Gómez, "Tourism, the Spanish Economy and the Balance of Payments," in *Tourism in Spain*, ed. M Barke (Wallingford: CAB International, 1996), 119

³¹ Ibid

ultimately feeds the economy not only by receipts direct from the tourists but by providing cash flow and employment. The tourist Euro continues to generate a spill over into the whole of the Spanish economy and demand for goods and services provide a much needed knock-on effect for demand for other goods and services nationally.³²

The tolerance of the Spanish with regard to their foreign invaders has to be admired. They surrender so much of their own country and culture to accommodate the huge influx of foreigners, most of who appear to be not in the slightest bit interested in integrating with the locals. Admittedly the country annually reaps millions of tourist Euros from their visitors but, one has to ask if the situation where reversed, would the English put up with the dominance and overrun of the Spanish if they took up residence en masse on the Southern English coast? It is very much doubted they would. The Spaniards tolerate their foreign invaders because they bring essential tourist income into the economy but this applies to all nationalities and not solely to the British tourist.

Until recently, economic times have been good, particularly in Spain. The country has seen huge economic growth particularly in the last 10 to 12 years and the cost of living although rising slightly was still low enough to make the decision to migrate attractive. But now, since the recent economic bubble burst in 2009, there have been dramatic changes. The cost of living has risen especially in the tourist areas and even for the Spaniards times are hard and the seasonal tourist has found their budgets stretched and now complain about the increase in food prices.³³ There are even reports of English ex-pats returning home and abandoning property.³⁴ However, the global economic crunch has affected most of the Western World with Britain not been isolated by suffering economically. The cost of living in Britain for perhaps the first time is now comparable with that of Spain, its traditional poor relation.

The continuing forces of globalisation and the effects (advantages and disadvantages) of the EU now mean that we cannot look at a single country without considering the affects of its interlocking existence with its physical neighbours or past and present citizens. More than

³² Ibid 107

³³ The Telegraph, "Britons Living in Spain Not Prepared for When the Dream Goes Sour," 5/2/09
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/expat/expatnews/4513639/Britons-living-in-Spain-not-prepared-for-when-dream-goes-sour.html>

³⁴ The Telegraph, "Britons Abandon Dogs as They Quit Spain," 1/3/09
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/spain/4992188/Britons-abandon-dogs-as-they-quit-Spain.html>

ever before, nation-states, especially in the EU, are inextricably bound by the international flows of money, trade and communication – and tourism. All societies now seem to be co-dependant on each other – whether they like or not.³⁵ This interlinking and co-dependency has been highlighted by the sub-prime crash in the US prior to 2009 and the drastic ripple effect it had on the rest of the Western World. The recent global credit crunch and ensuing economic recession from 2009 has, without exception, had a significant impact on this area of Spain and the both the locals and the people who spend their holidays and retirement there. The effects on the average EU citizen have been most visible in their pocket. The Euro has dropped in value against other currencies and consequently the British Pound Sterling has also dropped on the international markets like the Euro. One of the many reasons there now exists such a large community of British is economic – or was. Originally Sterling was always strong against the Spanish Peseta (and subsequent Euro) and, coupled with a reasonably low cost of living, this was a huge draw card for the British at any time of the year. Spain was a cheap holiday but not any more it seems.

Since the introduction of the Euro and the Spanish entry in 2002 to the Eurozone the exchange rate has fluctuated. Until recently £1 would buy approximately €1.41. The exchange rate has floated around that mark for some time but never really shifted much more than a few points. At the time of writing (October 2010) and as a result of the earlier economic recession the exchange rate had dropped to £1 buys €1.18 or even less.³⁶ This drop in the international currency market rate therefore constitutes a decrease in the value of Sterling against the Euro of approximately 17 per cent. Britain is not in the Eurozone and previously relied on the historical security and strength of the British Pound particularly against European currencies and the Euro to maintain its value. Perhaps for the first time tourists are feeling the effects of this economic recession particularly as their currency mechanism has not held its value. Retirees on fixed income such as private pensions suffer as their disposable income shrinks and it was estimated that their income may have dropped by approximately 25 per cent in 2009.³⁷ Inflation has been a prominent factor in the cost of living in all European countries so compared to previous years the seasonal tourist is now finding that there is an increase in their day to day living costs of an estimated 25 per cent or more. British seasonal tourists bemoan the fact that the Euro has “dropped” and that “the

³⁵N Abercrombie and A Warde, eds., *Contemporary British Society*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), 7.

³⁶ FT.com, <http://markets.ft.com/ft/markets/currencies.asp>.

³⁷ The Telegraph, "Britons Living in Spain Not Prepared for When the Dream Goes Sour,"

Pound doesn't buy as much". In actual fact it could well be argued that it is the British Pound that has lost value on the foreign exchange markets evidenced by the value of the New Zealand dollar at the time of the study being £1 buying \$2.07.³⁸ Normally the rate would be around £1 buying \$3.00. The same change applies to the New Zealand Dollar and Euro exchange rate.

This sudden drop in value of Sterling against other currencies and particularly the value of the Euro adds to the problem for thousands of people who have either seen their investments shrink or disappear completely. There is then the inevitable economic ripple effect on the service providers – from food outlets to rented apartments. The British now have less to spend and therefore less to put into the local economy. Spain was a growing economic power in the early 2000's and was on the way to being one of the strongest in Europe but as a result of the financial downturn it has taken a hard economic fall. This is evident not only due to the same credit crunch but also by the reduction in receipts via the local economy.³⁹ It may not be too surprising then to learn that there are reports of a lessening of tolerance and increased levels of impatience shown to their ever-present foreign visitors.

³⁸ FT.com.

³⁹ The Telegraph, "Britons Living in Spain Not Prepared for When the Dream Goes Sour,"

Chapter Three

3.1 *English as a killer language*

For at least the last 500 years British explorers and pioneers have spread the use of the English language across the globe whether by conquest or colonisation. As a result spoken English has become a universally acknowledged and widely understood language. It is now common acceptance that English is the language of choice for many international corporate companies and international institutions such as the World Bank, UN and the EU.⁴⁰ There are however a large number of factors that contributes towards the expansion and acceptance of English as a dominant language in the EU. At one stage in modern world history the World Map was predominantly pink – British Empire pink. The expansion of the British Empire culminated in the glory of the extensive reach and success of Victorian colonisation with Queen Victoria even appointing herself Empress of India among other titles. From the early expeditions to the Americas in the 17th and 18th Centuries through to the colonisation of South Pacific countries, the British exported their culture, ideals, commerce, law and most importantly, their language. However, the spread of English as a dominant language in business, the corporate section and international institutions has only really happened since WWII and prior to that time translation between languages was necessary.⁴¹

The dominance of a language is linked with its political and economic relationship and therefore the power it projects is “a fluid and movable dynamic”.⁴² Britain was until WWII still part of the influencing group of nations on the world stage but the severe bombing during the war left severe damage to its major industries, towns and cities. Rebuilding a country is expensive and the financial fallout of WWII left it a country almost bankrupt and its main industries and infrastructure were so badly damaged that the reconstruction and retooling took decades to complete. This post-war rebuilding was slow and hindered the development of industry which in turn stifled economic and financial progress. America on the other hand was not hindered by such damage and reconstruction as it escaped intact with respect to bombing damage. More significantly the country had already profited greatly by being the

⁴⁰ R Phillipson, "English for the Globe, or Only for Globe-Trotters?," in *The Politics of English as a World Language*, ed. C Mair (Amsterdam Rodopi BV, 2003), 24.

⁴¹ S Mühlisen, "Towards Global Diglossia?," in *The Politics of English as a World Language*, ed. C Mair (Amsterdam: Rodopi BV, 2003), 107.

⁴² Ibid , 108.

main supplier of goods to the Allied Forces. Consequently, at the end of WWII America was already financially streets ahead of the rest of Europe and its industries continued to grow to enable the country to become the financial, economic and political leader and powerhouse of the modern age.

Forever leaning its wilting laurels Britain still has delusions of grandeur harking back to the Victorian age of power and world dominance. The British would still claim that it was the British Empire that was the driving force behind the dominance of English as a world language particularly in the corporate and business worlds. However, unfortunately for the pride of the British, it was their colonial cousins across the “Pond” that slipped in through the back door and has taken the centre of the world stage since WWII. The strength of the American economic and political dominance has taken (or the other expression that has been used is “forced”) the English language to be a lingua franca of the modern age.⁴³ However, both the Americans and British have invested heavily in the promotion of their language and it is so widely used that linguists refer to English as a ‘poly-centric’ language.⁴⁴ The demands to speak English only is often seen as nothing less than rude but the persistence of this demand particularly in the business world together with a mono-linguistic attitude to non-English speakers by Americans and British in business and political environments has obviously had a long term effect.⁴⁵ The English language today is considered a “post-imperial language” as it was at the forefront of the success of the British Empire but the imperial days of colonialism and the dominance of the English by the colonisers have effectively disappeared leaving only the language as evidence of their history. The power shift in the English language has gone from a nationalist dominance to corporatism which has adopted the English language in the absence of the nation-state.⁴⁶

Regardless of how or why the English language has become acceptable or dominant in the world today the British still consider that they have no need to integrate with language to the extent that their EU neighbours have. Is the history of colonialism and the English language and subsequent corporatism adoption enough to be good reason to explain why the British seem ambivalent about integrating in the EU?

⁴³ Ibid

⁴⁴ Phillipson, "English for the Globe, or Only for Globe-Trotters?," 24.

⁴⁵ Mühlisen, "Towards Global Diglossia?," 107.

⁴⁶ Phillipson, "English for the Globe, or Only for Globe-Trotters?," 24.

We can identify three reasons:

- Historically, the British had its Empire and now it is Head of the Commonwealth but only by virtue of the allegiance of those ex-colonies and the continuation of the British monarchy. Although the economic power and colonial dominance has dissipated, the attitude by Britain and the British has not.
- Britain still has strong ties with its previous colonial cousins, America, Australia, Canada and New Zealand. There are distinct connections in culture, social and political aspects and of course, they all speak English.
- Britain prides itself in its strong political and economic traditions and as such harbours great suspicion about the introduction of any new system.⁴⁷

The spread and development of English only speaking enclaves around the world has prompted much interest and analysis. The development and the acceptance of English as a corporate lingua franca has been described as a distinct advantage and asset to the business world yet at the other end of the spectrum described as a “killer language” or more harshly “linguistic genocide”. There are questions as to whether the English language has become too successful and is now a result of what is termed “imperialism” manifested in British schools by not putting greater emphasis on foreign language learning.⁴⁸ This “imperialism” extends to the apparent lack of adult language education and the availability and accessibility to foreign language learning in general. By comparison, in other EU countries a second language has always been high on the curriculum even for primary school children and usually that second language is English.

As a result of the large British communities, particularly on the coastal areas, we can correctly assume that the language skills and demand for English language learning by the Spanish is fuelled by economic demand or need. If, for instance the Spanish refused to bend to the demands of the English and in return the English spoke only a little Spanish the whole dynamic of the area would completely change. So, from this we could formulate opinion that there is more than one driving factor and that both the Spanish and the English are in fact sub-consciously creating a socially finely balanced community. This is not as a result of the sole domination of the “killer language” or “imperialism” but is inextricably linked with the

⁴⁷ M Heller, *European Integration as an Elite Process: The Failure of a Dream?* (London: Routledge, 2008), 221.

⁴⁸ B Seidlhofer and J Jenkins, "English as a Lingua Franca and the Politics of Poverty," in *The Politics of English as a World Language*, ed. C Mair (Amsterdam: Rodopi BV, 2003), 141.

economic need and demand by the Spanish. Any imbalance would have a drastic effect on the Spanish and their economy than would ultimately affect the English visitors.

3.2 *Language Ability*

There have been various studies completed on the language abilities of selected Northern European retirees settled in the Southern Member States of the EU. These studies show that the level of ability to learn, retain and reuse a language is linked to such primary things as education, affluence and linguistic background. The data relating to the area of study is replicated below.

Table 1 – Extract of results of two studies on Language Ability of Migrants to Spain

Language Skills	Study A* Percentage of respondents	Study B** Percentages
Very Fluent	4.4	28.6
Quite Fluent	20.6	NC
Some Knowledge	63.9	NC
Few Words/none	11.1	71.4

NC – Not Collected

* Study A - British retirement migration to Europe 1995-1996

British resident aged 60 + and resident for at least 6 months of the year.⁴⁹

** Study B - Survey of elderly European retired migrants to Andalusia, Spain 1995-1997.

Respondents were Northern European retirees resident for more than two months of the year aged 50+ for females and 55+ for males⁵⁰.

The first study (Study A) was designed to target and question only British retirees whereas the second study (Study B) expanded the target group and included nationalities from Northern European countries including Britain, Switzerland and Germany. Of those questioned, in both studies a majority claimed to have some knowledge or at least a minor grasp of the local language but the study did make allowances for some possible over inflated self assessments on the respondents' level of proficiency (particularly in Study B). The results also claim to show that the level of proficiency is in direct correlation to the history of the settlement and

⁴⁹ See by King, Warnes, and Williams, *Sunset Lives : British Retirement Migration to the Mediterranean* in Casado-Diaz, Kaiser, and Warnes, "Northern European Retired Residents in Nine Southern European Areas: Characteristics, Motivations and Adjustment " , 367.

⁵⁰ See V Rodriguez, G Fernandez-Mayoralas, and F Rojo, "European Retirees on the Costa Del Sol: A Cross-National Comparison," *International Journal of Population Geography*. 4 (1998) , 183 – 200, in Casado-Diaz, Kaiser, and Warnes, "Northern European Retired Residents in Nine Southern European Areas: Characteristics, Motivations and Adjustment " , 367.

the socio-economic differences of the respondents. Socio-economic background and education have common sources. Often the lower socio-economic groups have lower educational options and options for continuing or further education are limited. Further, language teaching in schools and advancement to further education has only been part of the standard education system since the 1970's. The retirees under study were part of the schooling system prior to this time and would not have had the advantages afforded the later generations. On the other side, the higher up the socio-economic scale a person is able to associate with the better their schooling is likely to have been and so not as disadvantaged in the education sector. It is also more likely that a person from this higher grouping will have been exposed to language learning at an earlier age, had the opportunity of University education and the relative freedom to experience foreign travel.

3.3 Defining “Barriers to Learning”

Language is defined as a “symbol of social identity.”⁵¹ It is also the existence of a common or shared language that is used as part of the definition of the political identity of a Nation State.⁵² Not only is language a fundamental part of our own social identity and culture, it is also what sociologists view as the “bridge between individual identities and social groups to which persons belong”.⁵³ Therefore, in order to understand why there appears to have been little uptake of Spanish language learning by the target group in this study, it is important to look at and understand the elements that may have had an influence on their decision making process. Learning another language, particularly for older people, can prove to be challenging if not extremely difficult and age is often quoted as being the first and foremost barrier to learning. However, age is not the sole barrier nor is it the main one as there are many other factors such as money, lack of encouragement from spouses or peers and just outright fear of failure or looking stupid that can have a huge impact on any person's self-confidence and ability to learn.

Language is also a fundamental part of our own social identity and culture. It is also what sociologists view as the “bridge between individual identities and social groups to which persons belong”.⁵⁴ The English have created for themselves an unfortunate international

⁵¹R Scruton, ed. *The Palgrave Macmillan Dictionary of Political Thought*, 3rd ed. (Houndhills, Hamps: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 379

⁵² Montevideo Convention 1934

⁵³ Turner, ed. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology*, 322 to 323

⁵⁴ Ibid .

reputation as being a nation of mono-linguists and their attitude to other languages is often misconstrued as one of superiority. The English also carry an old tag left over from their ancestors influence and impact through English colonial dominance which often gives rise to a presumed historic 'colonial' attitude to other countries. Britain is an island and carries strong island mentality in relation to foreigners and foreign lands. In Britain it is still very common to use the terms "going aboard", "overseas holidays" or "going to the Continent" when referring to a visit to Europe. This reference structure, intentional or otherwise, may or may not reflect the British attitude to integration but it does appear to reflect an inherent mind set that is one of "us and them".

Regardless of the implications of low levels of language integration this community appears to be economically self-supporting. There are English-speaking and English run services – bars, restaurants, car-hire, real estate and shops. It is then little surprise perhaps that in these communities there is a low level of Spanish language uptake among the British as quite clearly the need has been removed. In fact it is quite obvious when amongst the community that a majority of English people struggle to string a basic sentence together. The straight fact of not being able to communicate in the native language is that the lack of language ability can result in isolation and affect wellbeing but this is not recognised nor is it considered a problem until something goes wrong.

It is accepted that language learning particularly in older people and the success of that learning has a direct correlation to their previous level of education and exposure to other language. The same survey as in *Table 1* also showed that only 18.6 per cent of British respondents had attended Higher Education such as University in earlier life as compared with 41.4 per cent of respondents from the general Northern European group. Likewise a similar pattern was for Secondary Education being 26.9 per cent and 50.8 per cent of respondents of Survey A and B respectively.⁵⁵ Other studies undertaken with British retirees in France showed a higher level of fluency which was attributed to the fact that the respondents recorded that they had also attended higher education in earlier life. A further point on this result was that the respondents in that survey were permanent residents and by choice did not

⁵⁵ Casado-Diaz, Kaiser, and Warnes, "Northern European Retired Residents in Nine Southern European Areas: Characteristics, Motivations and Adjustment " , 364.

live in an ex-pat community but tended to live amongst the local community therefore creating their own need to communicate with their neighbours.⁵⁶

Historically, the coast in this area of Spain has been settled predominantly by English speaking people and in recent years by those of the same socio-economic grouping. Further, the study shows that the socio-economic background and the level of education of a respondent in earlier life directly dictates their levels of expectation of themselves in language learning and the type of social group they attach to.⁵⁷ Therefore, in this respect, if the respondent's level of education was low then they are already likely to believe that they are unable to learn another language. Further, because of this predisposition they are highly unlikely to aspire to anything outside of what they see as normal. This applies to the seasonal tourist as opposed to the permanent retired resident who is presumed to have a strong commitment to settle in their new country because they have no desire to return to their country of origin. The seasonal tourists on the other hand still have their home back in Britain and so are perceived to not have such a strong connection to the host country and therefore little commitment to learning the language. This distinction is flawed as there are a large number of permanent residents who have made a commitment to living in Spain but due to their socio-economic grouping and the low educational standard feel that they are unable to learn the language. It may not be that they are "unwilling" to learn but their background subconsciously dictates that they are "unable" to learn also have not made any commitment to learning the language for various reasons. Their socio-economic and educational backgrounds then translate into another barrier to their learning.

The level of language uptake amongst non English speaking Northern Europeans seems to be higher than that of the British. The Swiss for instance have a native bilingualism so with a relatively low command of English and with their commitment to a new life in Spain they were more willing to learn the language. Both surveys reported that the majority of British residents on the *Costa del Sol* said that they knew only a few Spanish words, with a minority (25 per cent) claiming to be able to do slightly more than get by in shops or be able to order restaurant meals. The other more significant comment was that in areas where there are dense concentrations of a tourist group there is little need to learn the local language so as a result

⁵⁶ Ibid 361.

⁵⁷ Ibid , 372,

their native language have become the “lingua franca” for everyday services and facilities.⁵⁸ The prevalence of the English language in this particular area has meant that other languages do not appear to feature much. Other nationalities, such as the Swiss and Scandinavians, also speak English to a reasonable level of fluency and although they may also speak Spanish they will use English as a preference due to the dominance of the language in that community.

As already noted the level of language learning can be linked to a person’s educational and socio-economic background. In addition, it is also an accepted factor that the more that a person has been exposed to another language earlier in life the higher their subsequent achievement level of learning will be. The British appear to be the group that are the least enthused or keen to learn Spanish in comparison to their fellow Northern European retirees. Perhaps the ubiquitous nature of the use of English among businesses in the area has made it such that the British tourists can get by quite well on a day to day basis without having to learn the language. They have no need to persevere and learn Spanish.

The target group for this research defined “speaking Spanish” as something more complex than just being able to put a few words together and for them “speaking” is completely different to simply understanding words. Many respondents considered that being able to speak Spanish means that a person can hold a conversation in that language which is something that they cannot do. Even though they can all identify, understand and pronounce a large number of words they still do not consider this knowledge to be even on the lowest level for “speaking” and to some of them their knowledge is of little significance. One participant who owned their own property said that he had done a self-teaching audio language course but did not feel confident to hold a conversation. However, he could if needed, communicate with the local plumber or handy-man if something needed doing on their apartment so it would seem then that he could communicate better than he gives himself credit for. Respondents felt that in order to “speak” the language this would mean that they had to be of a reasonably fluent level therefore confidence and fear of failure come into play and then prevent any attempts being made. It is wrong to interpret the word “speak” as “fluent” as they are two completely separate stages of language learning and advancement. For some respondents this definition was a significant limiting factor as they knew that they

⁵⁸ Ibid , 371.

are not “fluent” and to them that meant that they could “speak” the language. The barriers here are self-confidence and fear of failure.

Another point raised by some of the respondents was that the Spaniards, no matter what their age, appeared more confident in speaking or attempting to communicate in another language than the English. The question on this observation was whether the Spanish were either better at picking up another language or did they have better learning facilities available to them? The answer may be a combination of the two but it is anticipated that it is mostly the latter. Living in an environment where different languages have become something of “the norm” and part of daily life does remove barriers to communication. For the Spaniards who live and work in this area it has now become part of daily life that there will be interactions with foreigners, mostly English, which in turn increases confidence in attempting to communicate. The limitations of fear of failure or lack of self confidence create false hurdles which some find difficult overcoming and get stuck between. So, it is not that the Spanish are any better at learning a language than the English it is simply the fact that they have greater exposure and most significantly, accept this second language as being a part of normal life. Their willingness to accept and utilise the English language alongside their own means that there is effectively no “communication barrier”. The result being that English can live happily on a day to day basis with the Spanish language ability providing not only advantages for both parts of the community but also a security blanket for the English.

Some of the respondents to this research commented that there seems to have been a visible increase in the number of older Spaniards who can speak English (admittedly in varying degrees of knowledge). Does this therefore imply that they have been exposed to language learning more than would their English opposite? Obviously, living and working in an area where the need to speak another language is important and therefore an increase in exposure means that there is a greater inclination to learn. For business operators, if the financial success of your business depended on your language ability, then the incentive to learn is much greater than those for whom language is not an issue. The perceived return on investment of time and effort is greater for those whose livelihood will benefit from being able to speak the other language. If however the need is removed, the return on that investment would be reduced and so would the inclination to learn.

3.4 *Integration or Isolation?*

There is a fundamental necessity for the EU to ensure that there is a certain level of integration between, and existing within, the Member States and by rewarding the integration of the European societies the EU is promoting the idea of a “good society”.⁵⁹ The word “integration” has its opposite in the word “segregation”. Integration is “the system by which all members of the state have accessibility to and all institutions are made available to them regardless of creed, colour or origin”. In practise integration provides the means by which society can try to form a unified civil society or “good society”.⁶⁰ But the unified civil or “good” society must operate under the jurisdiction of that particular state. However, the process of integration also challenges societal tolerance to other sections of that society. It is therefore important that to avoid any conflict in the process of continued integration society must be able to support the balance of tolerance of its members to achieve that civil, or good, society.⁶¹ But what is society? We can describe it as:

....a large group of people, living on a certain territory, connected to each other by dense communication patterns and manifold, close relationships and held together also by social and political institutions.⁶²

This description of “good” society may sound familiar as it is very similar to the definition of a Nation State but this definition relates more to a multi-levelled society within that Nation State rather than the external view. A society, in contrast to a Nation State is not bound by geographic borders and so it allows for temporal movement of its members but “it is a fundamental problem of any society how to achieve a satisfying amount of integration”.⁶³ Although the definition of society can be applied to the society of the EU the reference is to the smaller developing societies created by the existence of the EU. The ability to move, change residence and opt into alien societies and communities that has made it easier than ever before.

There are three points in connection with a society and in reference to integration:

⁵⁹ Heller, *European Integration as an Elite Process: The Failure of a Dream?*, 200.

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ Scruton, ed. *The Palgrave Macmillan Dictionary of Political Thought*, 334

⁶² Heller, *European Integration as an Elite Process: The Failure of a Dream?*, 200.

⁶³ Ibid, 200.

- Do not presume that society is free from conflict. Those internal conflicts assist the growth and development or even segmentation of that society.
- Integration includes a number of different components and conditions all of which are linked together in complicated ways.
- Integration is a highly variable structure.⁶⁴

European integration is seen by some as a “necessary evil” and something that is forced upon its citizens. The nationalistic tendency of any Member State is very likely to have negative impact on the level of integration and Britain sits high on the list of those countries that do not relish the policy of integrating with their neighbours. Be it a geographical reason (the fact that it is an island) or a resistance encouraged by the British Euro-sceptics, in general there is still a visible reluctance by British society as a whole to commit to integrate on the EU standard. Integration with their European neighbours is viewed by the British as something of fraternising rather than associating.⁶⁵

Like all countries in recent decades, Spain has seen an increase in immigration not only from other Member States but from external States and there are distinctly different levels of tolerance. Spain considers that the country has a problem with immigrants with the rate of illegal immigration a constant challenge. They are more preoccupied with illegal immigrants from North Africa than migrants from the EU and the Spanish also appear to be less tolerant of the movement of Eastern Europeans into Spain. However and perhaps because North Europeans have been coming to this part of Spain for many years and they may still have their primary home in their own country they are therefore still treated as tourists. The difference between the typical Northern European migrant and other migrants is that the former are likely to go home at some stage and not become dependant on the State. There are two main factors in deciding whether any immigrant is accepted into another society, firstly if they look like you and secondly that they are not a burden on society. We can question then whether the Spaniards “tolerate” the Northern Europeans because they look like them? Regardless of the multi-cultural mix in Northern Europe and Britain the predominant migrant to Spain tends to be of white European ethnicity. It can be argued that because these migrants are of European descent therefore the Spanish class them to be “one of us”. Although the migrants in these groups are not treated like a permanent part of Spanish society, in that they are still

⁶⁴ Ibid , 201.

⁶⁵ Ibid , 221.

foreigners, they are tolerated by the Spanish as if they were short term tourists. Further, these Northern European migrants are not a burden on the State Welfare system as they have income (or work) and so provide for themselves. It appears that the Spaniards have a problem with their North African migrants and the level of immigration from that area in particular. Spain, along with Italy and Malta, are regular targets for illegal immigration attempts and although they have funding support from EU Frontex the problem continues. Immigration from Africa and from the former Eastern Bloc countries are considered nationally as a “problem” and words such as “crisis” is used to describe the situation.⁶⁶

The main problem with the large settlement of one group of peoples of the same culture, ethnic or national origin is the risk of isolation of the community from the host community. Whether this isolation is self-imposed by the migrant or is as a result of “othering” by the host citizens the resulting implications can often be the same. Throughout the world there are communities of migrants or enclaves of “foreigners” within host countries who continue to operate, survive and to blend into society to varying degrees. The Metropolitan City of London, England has played constant host to a number of ethnic groups most of which have congregated in specific areas of the city and created their own “home away from home.” These are exemplified by the Bangladeshi community in Shoreditch, Greek Cypriots in Haringey, Indians in Southall and Jamaicans in Brixton. However these communities have survived and continue to thrive on the basis that they are fully integrated into British society in that they work, are educated and contribute to the good of society as a whole. In fact, it is the culture diversity that adds to the enrichment of society in these areas. These migrant communities therefore have to integrate into the British society and the social system in order to continue to survive and by doing so they also become an “acceptable” part of the British cultural mix. It should also be noted here that those groups of ethnic minorities who attempt to settle in Britain and who if are not seen to be making an effort to integrate are publicly rejected and considered outsiders and a threat to the continuation of “good society”. These communities are distinctly different from our seasonal tourists in Spain in that the British migrants originally moved to Britain for work and to raise families whereas the seasonal tourists and other migrants to Spain move for retirement.

⁶⁶ A M López-Sala, *Inmigrantes Y Estados: La Respuesta Política Ante La Cuestión Migratoria* (Barcelona: Rubi, 2005), 263.

The risk of a high rate of immigration and in particular the settlement of groups of immigrants concentrating on the same area push forward questions that have to be asked as to whether this diversity is moving away from the theory of multiculturalism more to segregation.⁶⁷ This theory is demonstrated where obvious segregation has occurred as a result of the mass settlements in Britain of Pakistani and Indians in the Northern English towns of Bradford, Leeds, Birmingham and Leicester over the last few decades for instance. A high proportion of immigrants from one particular country or of ethnic identity settled in one specific area can cause problems with integration of new immigrants into British society. There are also problems of isolation from British nationals who no longer feel they are part of society in their own home town. A high concentration of any one external culture in an area can lead to voluntary segregation by that part of the society. Multiculturalism on the other hand is where a society is more diverse and often the dominant culture is that of the Nation State and not of the immigrant.

The British attitude to foreign settlement in their own country is somewhat selective and sometimes carries something of a “not in my backyard” attitude. The British public are quick to complain against migrants becoming too dominant in any one area in their own country but do not see the comparison between that community and the one that the British have created in Spain. This post-imperial attitude of the British towards settlement en masse in another country contradicts their nationalistic tendencies when it comes to immigrants in their own country. They do not seem to be slightest bit perturbed about the fact that their own level of integration is extremely low but are all too ready to comment about “those immigrants” who do not learn English or integrate back home. The problem is that the British ex-pats do not consider themselves as immigrants and are openly confused at the similarity as to them immigrants are a separate, and often lower, class of people to which they do not belong. The development of this community in Spain and the co-existing balance that sustains it is in complete opposition to the situation of the migrant to Britain. Any dominant community is openly vilified if they do not attempt to integrate and learn English and is often seen as a threat. Adapting and learning the migrants language in the same way that the Spanish has done is unheard of and would just not be acceptable as the migrants are in Britain and so have to learn English.

⁶⁷ Ibid , 77. s

3.5 *Ghetto or Sub-culture?*

Sociologists have a constant desire to give a label or definition to all functions and workings of our society. It has become an important aspect of our own social construction for us to be able to identify and put into a mental slot where individuals and groups of people fit within our own boundaries. Therefore the definition of a large group of foreign people from the same country settling in and dominating one particular area in a host country traditionally is referred to as a “ghetto”. The term “ghetto” refers to the Italian practice of setting aside urban areas for Jewish people however it is now associated with forced segregation of socially similar groups.⁶⁸ Unfortunately, the word “ghetto” instantly conjures up images of WWII and the horrendous practise of ethnic cleansing under the Nazi Regime. In cities such as Chicago and New York in the USA residential areas were built and set aside for the portion of the community who were treated as socially and economically lower class than the majority of the population. These areas, although following the characteristics of the definition of a ghetto, are known generally as “the Projects” and are traditionally inhabited by a large number of Black African Americans and Hispanics and other immigrants. The term “ghetto” now is used to describe any group that is cut off from normal social life either by society itself or on its own volition. These days the term has too much of a negative connotation and has been replaced with names such as “Chinatown” or “Little Italy”. The name may have changed and be more acceptable but the function and basis for segregation remains the same.

The difference between the traditional term “ghetto” and how it may be applied here is that originally groups were forced by their hosts, through political or legal ways, to live and work in designated areas and so create those ghettos. Although in the USA it can be argued that the residents of the “Projects” in New York for instance were not “forced” but they have little option due to social and financial circumstance but to live there. There may be no “force” but there is definite influence. Back to our group on the Spanish coast, there is no “force” for them to live in a concentrated area as they are legally free and physically able to come and go as they please but there are other “forces” that keep them from leaving and prevent them from settling elsewhere. The main “force” would be that they (the English) do not need to speak Spanish within their secure community. They can live quite happily in the English speaking enclave without having to integrate, associate or communicate with anyone other than another English speaker. The Spaniards who speak English therefore unwittingly perpetuate this

⁶⁸ Turner, ed. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology*, 241.

situation and so encourage their foreign neighbours to continue to congregate in their own semi-closed community. This is aided by the large number of other Northern Europeans who also speak English as a language of choice rather than Spanish. We constantly refer to the English as having a dominate language that overrides others, but it is not the English themselves that are using their language to dominate, it is in fact the Spanish (and others by default) who are using English to control the situation.

Although this is arguably purely theoretical and there is no “force” in the true sense of the meaning of the word there is “influence”. This “influence” comes externally from the Spanish by continuing to speak English and then internally from the English themselves who in general are not prepared to learn Spanish and as a consequence convince themselves that they do not need to. Another “influence” is fear of not being able to cope as they cannot communicate if they are outside their comfort zone and finally, there is the fear of being seen as different from your friends. The English have a fear that if they move out of their community they would not be able to cope as they could not manage in Spanish as the whole point and functionality of a community is the “sense of belonging” which is achieved by having commonalities. They also have the fear that if they do learn the local language they will segregate themselves from their friends as being “different” and they would belong to neither community which is not desirable. Even though the Spanish may be imposing an external “influence”, they themselves are subject to that same “influence”. The “fear” for them is that any pressure to integrate may drive their tourists away and they would leave and not return which would result in an effective collapse of that section of the country’s economy. The Spanish therefore have created a safe community for the tourists where there is little need for integration either socially or linguistically. The provision of services to the English mean that they are encouraged to settle in certain areas and discouraged by their lack of language ability to move outside or too far from their secure community. This circular system has developed over many years and although it is constantly the subject of criticism for the lack of vision and integration, the system works well for both sides.

The movement of seasonal migrants (and also labour migrants) is termed as “transnationalism” which is essentially “a concept that allows actions to cross the border of nation state” and involve all types of mobility that are referred as “self-replicating” in the same way that a “virus” self-replicates in groups such as seasonal and successional migrants. Transnationalism involves what is described as an “intense transfer or exchange of

information”.⁶⁹ This information exchange may occur through the exchange of goods and services, movement of people or exchange of cultures between people. It is “self-replicating” because the migrants move freely backwards and forwards at intervals across borders. The viral aspect is in reference to the development of the transnational group and how it grows over time by attracting similar group members to its community. Transnationalism can be at a national, multinational or supranational level. Under this definition it is argued that when people, and consequently groups of people that have developed virally, engage in transnationalism their actions weakens any nationalist strength that they may have whether it be a political or cultural tie and thereby removes the boundaries between any two cultures.⁷⁰

The theory of transnationalism therefore can be applied to our target group of seasonal tourists. They fit the category of successional migrants and by virtue of their growth in number of their community have self-replicated in the viral manner as expected which has been assisted greatly by their hosts. However, for this particular community the breakdown of nationalist strength is not evident. If anything, their attachment to nationalist values continues and manifests strongly in their own community ideals and social network. There may be no definitive and obvious boundaries between the two cultures in this example but more of a blend of the two.

The next question is then is this now a “counter-culture”? This is a term used to describe “the deliberate fostering and creation of a culture suited to an alternative society in overt defiance of traditional forms, customs, manners and values.” It therefore displays a tolerance within a community which has mutual respect for its members.⁷¹ There are difficulties of living in two cultures, language being one of them however the English who reside in this area of Spain (and probably this applies to other areas of similar migration) do not seem to concern themselves with the “other” culture as they are too enveloped in their own. So, this little part of England in the sunshine has now taken on something of a “sub-culture”. Although they do not absorb themselves into the Spanish culture, they do eat their food (to some extent) and frequent the bars and *Tascas* (small bars with food), take the morning coffee and brandy like the other Spanish old folk and even indulge in a the odd *tapas* (small food portions with drinks). They are not quintessentially British and definitely not Spanish and therein lay a

⁶⁹ S Bozic, "The Achievement and Potential of International Retirement Migration Research: The Need for Disciplinary Exchange," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 32, no. 8 (2006)

⁷⁰ Ibid

⁷¹ Scruton, ed. *The Palgrave Macmillan Dictionary of Political Thought* , 147.

problem; they make themselves unacceptable to one side but have differentiated themselves from the other.⁷²

The English people targeted for this research will almost certainly not have any Spanish friends and do not mix or “get involved” with other Spaniards in the way that they interact with their own English friends but this is because they cannot communicate in Spanish. This observation was put to the target group and they were asked if they had, or would like to have, Spanish people in their social circle. After some consideration they did admit there was a possibility that they would have more involvement with the Spanish community if language was not such an issue and if the problem of communication was removed. However this barrier did not deter them from making acquaintances with Spaniards such as their neighbours, shopkeepers and other retired people they came across regularly. These relationships were restricted to the usual greeting and pleasantries but were considered important by the group in recognising and acknowledging their existence. To do otherwise would be considered rude and bad manners simply to ignore someone because you did not speak the same language. One respondent did say that she wished she could interact more with her neighbours if only to enquire after their own well being.

The respondents also reported that not being able to communicate was to them a significant issue but they did not feel disadvantaged by this as they all felt well supported by their group of friends and the wider community. This system of support is perhaps one of the factors that contribute to the perceived lack of “need” to speak the language. If they needed some Spanish support then they nearly all said that they had the confidence in knowing that they could call on someone who could communicate for them whether it is another English person or a Spaniard. This would include for example the Porter(s) in their apartment block, a local bar owner or the medical staff at the clinic. Again, and this is a recurring theme, they also agreed that if the support system provided by their social circles was removed therefore the “need” to be able to speak the language would be increased. The respondents acknowledged that this would be the case but did not see the situation changing any time soon and more importantly it would have to be approached from both sides of the community otherwise any changes would not succeed.

⁷² Abercrombie and Warde, eds., *Contemporary British Society*, 7.

It was very apparent that age was considered to be a significant factor in their ability to learn. There seemed to be a consensus of opinion that as they got older their ability to learn, absorb, retain and re-use was reduced. These seasonal tourists had been initially drawn to this particular area for a number of reasons including the accessibility to the coast but being just far enough away from the main tourist crowd. The fact that there was no apparent need to speak the language had been a big draw card. Further “up the hill” towards *el Pueblo* was less of a tourist area and so the requirement to be able to speak Spanish became more important and the type of tourist and foreign resident who ventures to this area will therefore be more integrated. Further “down the hill” there was too many short term tourists and, due to the nature of that beast, the need to speak Spanish for the tourist had been completely removed. These seasonal tourists preferred to have more of a mix with the Spanish in their day to day life even if they did not socialise with them. Therefore this implies that the incentive to learn a language for the purposes of integration will depend on the how high or low the concentration of the foreign is in a particular area. The higher the concentration or presence of the foreigner in any one area will reduce the need to learn or use the local language. On the contrary then the lower the concentration or presence of the foreigner in any one area should increase the need to learn and use the local language. The presence of the “need” is paramount to the acceptance of language learning and the success or otherwise of language integration. By deduction then if the “need” is reduced or removed the level of acceptance of language learning is reduced or removed accordingly. However this has to be qualified as this is not to say that just because a person lives in a predominantly Spanish area and speaks the language they will be fully integrated into the community. Likewise it does not mean that a person who lives in a predominantly English area will be completely isolated. Integration is also about acceptance and understanding of differences working from both ends of the spectrum and integration also relies upon a desire to be integrated and not just a need.

Chapter Four

4.1 *“Just speak English – it’s quicker”*

In the early days of tourism to Spain the younger Spaniards grasped the opportunities put before them and led the field in mastering the bi-lingual requirement. Whereas most, if not all, of the older community could not speak English because like their English counterparts, older Spaniards in that era did not have exposure to another language at school as the education for the working classes in their generation would have been limited to necessities only. The younger generation had more opportunity for language learning at school and as they have grown older the next generation have taken their place perhaps with better skills due to more exposure and opportunity.

As part of the research a series of interviews took place with a number of the seasonal tourists in *Arroyo*. These interviews were designed to ascertain attitudes and feelings towards learning a language and how they felt about the lack of integration through language. At the outset it had been decided that a structured formal interview would not be appropriate mainly due to the older age of the demographic. The interviews were framed in a less formal and more casual manner and were either with couples or in a group situation. In all cases the information forthcoming was honest and the opinion expressed demonstrated that this was an issue that they had already considered in some depth previously.

Although the interviews were not structured in a formal sense there were some guiding questions to allow the discussed to evolve but be controlled so as not to wander onto different topics. The guiding questions were:

1. How long have you been coming to this area?
2. Do you speak any Spanish?
3. Have you ever had any lessons?
4. Do you try and speak Spanish?
5. What are the main problems with learning the language for you personally?
6. Do you still use Spanish shops, bars, restaurants etc. or prefer the English ones?
7. When would you feel vulnerable not being able to communicate?
8. Are you aware of the free lessons available?

There were two recurring comments from the target group. The first is that lessons are expensive and do not cater for their age group; and the second is that even if they do try and speak in Spanish the locals reply in English. They then feel that they are not given an opportunity to use any Spanish they may know or have learned and they complain that this prevents them from improving and they openly admit that to some extent they have “given up trying”. These are the two main factors that seem to be the main barriers to language learning for the target group, but surprisingly, only a few said that they felt too old to learn.

The participants interviewed reported that in many instances (though they are keen to stress not all) their initial attempts to speak Spanish are often met with a reply in English. This attempt to speak and communicate in the language is often negated by the response in English. They feel that this knocks their confidence to continue any further in Spanish and so they revert to English. The Spaniards that the group are most likely to interact with on a regular basis are usually in restaurants, bars, supermarkets and general shops. To be fair to the Spanish most waiters in bars and restaurants are time conscious, quality of service is paramount and they have customers to satisfy. They are after all service providers and not teachers so, it is understandable then that they may use English as the leading language if they consider this would be the quickest and most successful form of communication.

If their attempt to speak in Spanish is thwarted at the first step then two things occur; firstly the English speaker loses confidence to continue with the conversation in Spanish and secondly there is no incentive for learning as there is no resulting gratification for their effort. The learning process is only effective if the received benefit is greater than the effort exerted. If they do not receive the benefit or satisfaction of their attempt being accepted and understood then they will consider that their effort was over exerted and to them it will therefore be a disappointment. As one respondent put it “after a while you give up because you don’t feel you are getting anywhere”. If all your attempts to speak the language flounder at the first attempt it is understandable that in the future you are less likely to want to continue trying and will possibly then become apathetic towards trying.

Confidence is also another factor that affects the ability to learn and develop skills to communicate. If the service the group received was rude they would not go back to that establishment so it is to the benefit of the Spaniard to be seen to be polite and helpful and by leading the conversation back to English has now obviously become a habit. One respondent

said “We are lazy and the brain doesn’t absorb things like it used to” but then laughingly added “ well at this age we even forget one another’s names” Part of the problem therefore is that often the learning experience is only a one sided operation when the response is not returned in Spanish. Learning should be a two sided experience and requires follow through to continue improvement. There is no direct answer to this predicament only that by not persisting with the basics of communication both parties is creating a self-perpetuating problem. The only solution to breaking this cycle is to break the habit and this would have to be done on both sides simultaneously.

The author’s had similar experiences to the respondents when attempting to instigate communication with some operators in Spanish. In order to maintain some level of anonymity and confidence the situations have been changed slightly but essentially convey the same message. The scenarios are reported as follows:

Scenario One:

Seated in a Café/Bar on main high street in Arroyo with two of the seasonal tourists from the target group the conversation is as follows:

Waiter *Hello*

Author: *Hola, dos cafés con leche y una cerveza por favour*

(Two coffees and a beer please)

(On delivery of drinks)

Waiter: *Two white coffees and one beer.*

The waiter assumed (correctly) that we were English and as two of the group were elderly that we must be tourists but he continued to speak in English even though the conversation had been instigated in Spanish. This meant that there was no opportunity to develop on the conversation as the reply in English sends out two separate messages: firstly, that the waiter prefers to speak English to you as he does not think you can speak Spanish and secondly, even after the initial greeting and request in Spanish that he assumes that you do not have the language ability to continue the conversation any further.

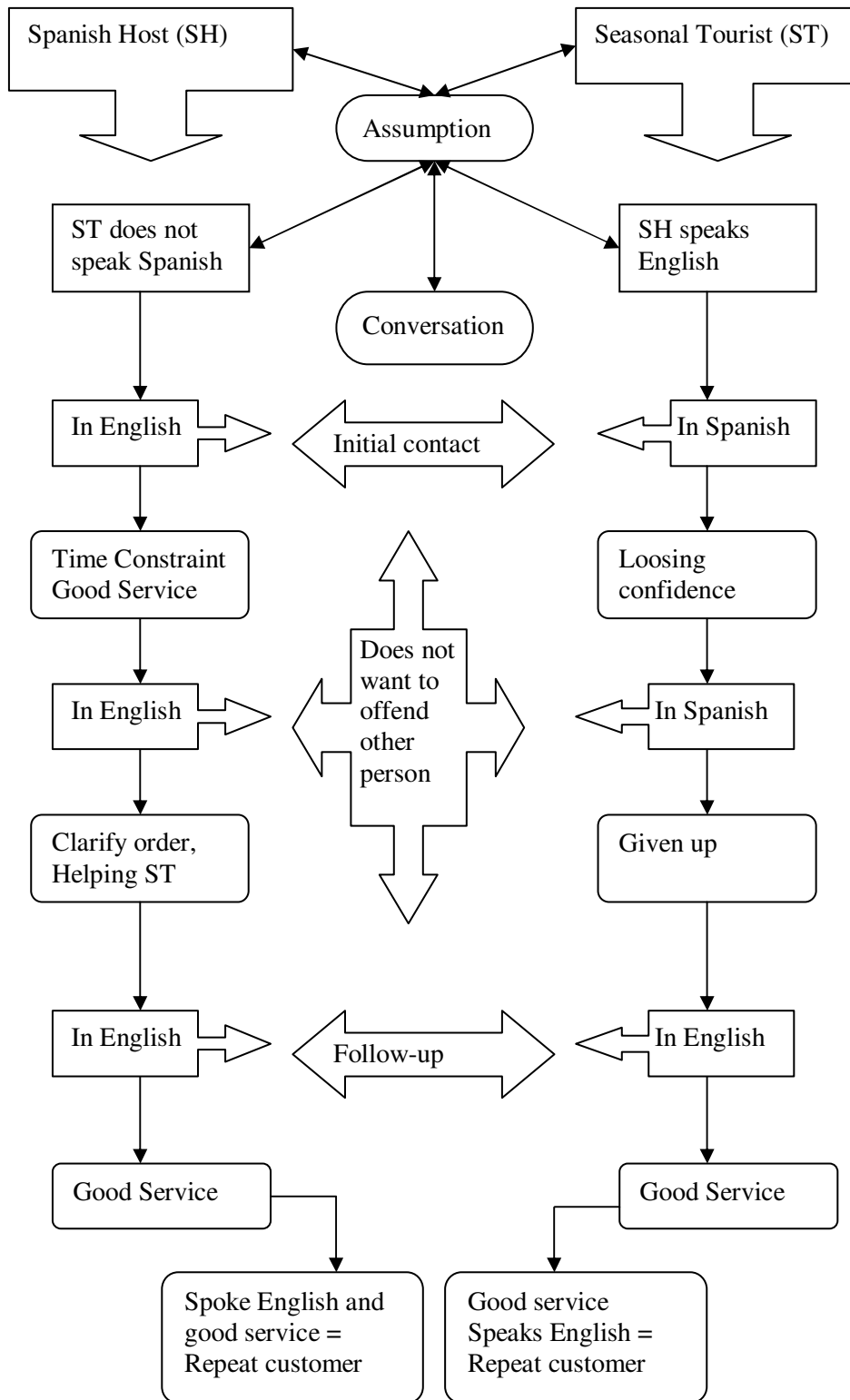


Figure 6 - Diagram to explain the flow of conversation in a hypothetical conversation.

This small interchange could have quite a detrimental effect on someone who was trying to learn and develop particularly if they were not totally confident in their own ability. This is a good example which explains the reason why many respondents do not attempt to speak much Spanish. However, we should not apportion blame solely on the waiter; after all he is doing his job and attending to the needs of his English speaking clientele. It is fair to presume that he is not the slightest bit aware this judgement has been passed on his contribution to this scenario and would probably be concerned that he has offended his clients. From this it is possible to deduct that there needs to be some sort of education process and to raise awareness if there is to be any progress with language learning and associated integration.

Scenario Two:

In a very popular and busy local Spanish run restaurant serving Spanish food in *Arroyo* again the author was seated at a table with other seasonal tourists from the target group. The menus were in English and Spanish and the conversation for ordering the meal went as follows:

Author: *Para mi el Gazpacho por favour*
(For me the Gazpacho please).

Waiter: *Sorry Gazpacho has finished.*

Author: *¡Que lastima! Entonces me gustaria las gambas.*
(What a shame! Then I would like the prawns).

Waiter: *¿Y para Segundo?*
(And for main course?)

Author: *Merluza con patatas bravas.*
(Hake with fried potatoes)

Waiter: *Bueno, gracias*
(Good, thank you)

In this scenario the two other diners present were from the target group and have extremely limited Spanish. They ordered from the bi-lingual menu as best they could and used both Spanish and English. The waiter continued to speak to them in English. The author then asked the waiter (in Spanish) why he spoke to them in English and her in Spanish. His reply was simply “*Usted habla Español, ellos no.*” (You speak Spanish, they don’t).

Again this was an example whereby the local Spaniard had a presumption that the English clients did not speak any Spanish and qualified this by his final statement. Not only is this because they were (obviously) English but that they were also elderly and therefore tourists. Perhaps more significantly he did not even consider that they may even want to attempt to speak the language. The presumption is then that if you are English and elderly you are therefore a tourist and will not be able to speak Spanish. Even after the first request was made in Spanish the reply was immediately in English. Not until there were some more complex and persistent exchanges did he relinquish his control over the conversation in English and revert to Spanish. Again, had there been a lack of confidence on the part of the English speaker the conversation would no doubt have not progressed as it did.

In both cases it was evident that English was the preferred mode of communication and the choice of language is used to an advantage to control the situation. Only until it becomes apparent that the other party obviously has some knowledge of Spanish only then does the conversation revert to Spanish thereby allowing a shift in the balance of power and control. As shown by the conversation progress in the final situation not until a more complex sentence or expression was used by the English speaker that the language choice changes. In all these cases the driver for control of the conversation and choice of language is carried out by the Spaniard. It is not until there is persistence from the English speaker that they consider relinquishing control of the conversation. The response to the challenge by the English speaker for control of the conversation to change to Spanish was, in all cases, initially received in an indifferent manner. However, when it then became evident that the English speaker could converse in Spanish with more depth the responses became increasingly receptive and encouraging.

Occasionally, the abruptness of the response in English by the Spanish person can often be construed as impatience or rudeness. However respondents in the target group seem almost sympathetic to the efforts that for instance a waiter may put in to trying to understand their order. The strong general consensus among the respondents was that if they didn't like the service they wouldn't go there again – something that any business operator cannot afford to happen. Therefore, even if the Spanish have the control in language on communication, as far as whether they have customers gives the English tourists have the upper hand because if they do not feel comfortable in a particular establishment they will stop going. The Spanish community cannot afford a drop in business and the chance of any bad publicity. It was also a

common thread amongst the respondents that they would not necessarily differentiate between Spanish and English run establishments simply on whether the owners or operators may or may not speak English. The language barrier did not appear to matter in these instances as long as they could be understood for the basics and the service was good. In fact respondents reported that they often had higher regard for the service and attention they got from their Spanish hosts than the English ones! One respondent commented that some of the English proprietors often appeared nonchalant about the quality of their service just because their customers were English as opposed to the Spanish who on the whole seemed to put more effort into keeping their customers happy and had more of a pride in their service.

It is a misguided preconception that all Spaniards living and working on the *Costa del Sol* speak English. This is not so, and although there is a high concentration of English speakers in this area, there are also a number who cannot speak any English at all. When paths do cross, communication tends to take on a different form in order for either party to be understood. Especially amongst the target group their failure to be able to communicate effectively does not deter them in attempting to “get the message across”. Their communication skills often include a series of hand gestures accompanied by repeating the noun or verb which, strangely enough, usually does the trick. A more complex or unusual situation can result in the “conversation” moving from simple descriptive hand gestures to an almost comical sort of charade and, in some cases, a diagram often assists. Surprisingly, more often than not the message does get through with both parties seemingly relishing the challenge! Even on the occasion that the message gets lost in translation all that exuberance is certainly not wasted as the exertion of the activity in trying to communicate adds to the following night’s entertainment and discussions no doubt on both sides of the community. One party may well be left wondering what the other one really wanted and having a dictionary to hand seems obviously too simple a solution. But then where is the fun in that?

4.2 *On Language, Learning and Integration*

It has already been discussed that, depending on a person’s background, there will be variations in both the imperative and the intention to learn Spanish.⁷³ The British are the least likely to learn Spanish because of the high number of English speakers amongst the Spanish community and so there is little incentive for the average seasonal tourist to learn the

⁷³ A Huber and K O'Reilly, "The Construction of Heimat under Conditions of Individualised Modernity: Swiss and British Elderly Migrants in Spain," *Ageing & Society* 24 (2004) , 335.

language as they can get by on a day to day basis without too much of a problem. If there is a problem they have the confidence that there is always someone on hand to assist. The British list the two main advantages for living in this area are the climate and the lifestyle but list the language difference as the number one disadvantage.⁷⁴ That is probably why many British continue to congregate with their own nationals so the disadvantage of the language does not affect their lifestyle. There is a dual aspect that contributes to this lack of necessity to learn or the removal of the need to learn. Firstly there are a high number of English speakers in this area – both Spanish and also from some other Northern European countries such as Scandinavia as already discussed. Secondly, the seasonal tourist (and permanent residents who have retired) are not part of the working community so they do not have to rely on language knowledge to advance their lifestyle. The British are very open about the fact that they do not have a need to learn and that the communication facility is something that is provided by surrogacy through their hosts. But they often admit that they have failed to integrate and put the lack of success of any integration down to their own frustrations with attempts to learn the language and in some cases claiming they are too old to learn.⁷⁵ Most tourists, whether seasonal or permanent, now have access not only to a wide range of services provided by English-speaking business but also plenty of British television and radio programmes and therefore the need to persevere does not exist.

The issue of whether there were any problems with the lack of language learning with regards to integration and any difficulties that may have resulted was discussed as part of the research with the target group. All respondents in the target group were retirees and had been coming to this part of Spain and this area in particular for an average of 15 years with some for 20 years or more. When asked, the majority said that they did not speak any Spanish; a few claimed to know some words and a few phrases; but only a small number actually said they could speak some Spanish of reasonable level. There is also the issue here of what is perceived as being able to “speak” or “communicate”. For them, defining “speaking Spanish” is different to understanding words in the supermarket. To be able to speak Spanish the respondents considered that this involves being able to communicate on a reasonably fluent basis with another person. This opinion reflects low levels of self-confidence and related low

⁷⁴ V Rodriguez, G Fernandez-Mayoralas, and F Rojo, "European Retirees on the Costa Del Sol: A Cross National Comparison," *International Journal of Population Geography* 4 (1998) ,191.

⁷⁵ Huber and O'Reilly, "The Construction of Heimat under Conditions of Individualised Modernity: Swiss and British Elderly Migrants in Spain," ; O'Reilly, *The British on the Costa Del Sol: Transnational Identities and Local Communities* .

expectations of personal achievement particularly where learning a language is concerned. Most people will have a tendency to under-rate their own ability when it comes to language ability so we can take it that when the response is that they “only know a few words” this could easily be extended to being able to shop, order from a menu and pass basic conversation when needed. However, without putting the respondents through a test, their own assessment of their ability has to be accepted.

The majority of the respondents have rented their apartments on a long term basis with some renting the same apartment for many years. There were also a number of owner occupiers. Many have been spending their winter months in Spain for a number of years and language has never been much of an issue and as one respondent pointed out “back then we didn’t need to” because the need to communicate in Spanish was not promoted. The eagerness of promotion of the *Costa del Sol* to encourage the English tourist did not include integration through language. If anything, it removed the communication barrier by encouraging the locals to speak English thereby also eliminating any possible stress or confusion that the tourists may encounter. It was this removal of the “need” which inevitably removed any possible language problems that attracted not only the package holiday tourist but also was very appealing to the retired community. Some of the respondents considered that if language had been an issue it was possible that they would have not considered choosing this area for their retirement holidays.

This fact aside the respondents showed a general opinion that their lack of language did not deter them from acknowledging their Spanish neighbours even if they could not communicate in the same language. In general they did not have Spanish friends per se but felt that if they did speak Spanish then that would be a possibility. An obvious factor is that the higher the competence of language the higher the probability that there will be Spaniards in their circle of friends but for them this was not a priority. In comparison, their “Marbella lot” neighbours see having Spaniards among their friends as something of a prize and as it distinguishes them from those who are less integrated and carries some “snob value”.⁷⁶ The opportunity to meet people is an important advantage to wellbeing but the British prefer to meet and mix with people from their own country as opposed to other Northern Europeans who are more

⁷⁶ Huber and O'Reilly, "The Construction of Heimat under Conditions of Individualised Modernity: Swiss and British Elderly Migrants in Spain," , 338 referring to K O'Reilly, "Blackpool in the Sun: Images of the British on the Costa Del Sol," in *Media and Migration*, ed. R King and N Woods (London: Routledge, 2001).

interested in meeting and getting to know Spanish people.⁷⁷ The attitude of the Spanish towards their tourists has had a significant effect on the low levels of integration and language participation. Millions of tourist Euros has been garnered for the local and national economies and so the situation has been encouraged to continue. Strangely, the Spanish do not expect the tourists, whether permanent or seasonal, to integrate and they are rarely perceived as people with whom they could build long-term, meaningful relationships⁷⁸. They continue to live side by side with little interaction that impedes integration from either side.

On discussing the problems that may arise due to the lack of language knowledge, one Spanish operator put it succinctly by saying “it is not a problem until it is a problem”. This means that on a day to day basis everyone carries on as normal and the language does not appear to be a barrier. Even if there are the odd occasions where the language proves to be a hurdle these situations are not of such a major dilemma that it cannot be sorted out later or with some third party assistance. The “problem” usually becomes a problem when, for instance, someone has to go to the doctors or needs to attend the hospital for treatment. The tourists can all go to an English speaking doctor but most of these are based on the coast and so some travelling is required which is a deterrent. Alternatively they can visit the local clinic, which they seem to prefer, but it is often unlikely that there will be anyone that speaks English. The solution has been that some clinics and doctors are able to provide translators to assist. The problem with the solution is two-fold: there is a cost for the service and the fee can vary considerably, but more importantly a visit to the doctors often involves something personal. In the latter situation, and especially with an older person, the doctor’s professional confidence is expected during consultations and there may be reluctance to discuss personal issues in the presence of a third party particularly if that other person is not medically qualified or is of the opposite sex. These scenarios can result in possible miscommunication to the doctor regarding symptoms and ailments or more problematic that there will be a risk of misdiagnosis. Fortunately these situations are not a regular occurrence. The main clinic in *Arroyo* and also the hospital further out of town towards *el Pueblo* has some English speaking nurses and doctors. The respondents were very keen to stress that the service at the local clinic and hospital was extremely highly rated and any problems with translation or language did not in any way detract from the medical care that had been received.

⁷⁷ Rodriguez, Fernandez-Mayoralas, and Rojo, "European Retirees on the Costa Del Sol: A Cross National Comparison," , 193.

⁷⁸ Huber and O'Reilly, "The Construction of Heimat under Conditions of Individualised Modernity: Swiss and British Elderly Migrants in Spain,"

The seasonal tourists have come up against a certain level of criticism for not being able to speak Spanish mainly due to the length of time they have spent in Spain and also because they have been coming to the same part for many years. There is greater tolerance from within the mixed community, especially in *Arroyo*, but there can be often a noticeable difference in tolerance is when a tourist has to venture outside the security of the community. One of the respondents was admitted to hospital with a sudden illness and whilst there they were openly criticised by medical staff for not being able to speak the language. The respondent reported that the staff at the hospital was very disparaging towards them when it was discovered that the person had been coming to Spain for some years. Because of their apparent lack of ability to communicate in Spanish the staff therefore presumed that they lacked the interest in learning to speak the language rather than considering that they had either not been encouraged to learn or whether they had the ability to do so. The respondent was very keen to stress that this was something of an isolated incident but it does reveal an underground opinion and frustration. Another report in a similar vein was that a retired person who considered that they had some language ability and could speak the language reasonably well was admitted to hospital for a sudden illness. When in hospital they realised that their level of comprehension was limited to only day to day occurrences such as shopping and social interaction. As a result they were unable to communicate as well as they wished and found this very frustrating and stressful.

4.3 *Business Operators*

There has for many years being a strong attraction for the English to leave their home land and invest all their savings in a business on the *Costa del Sol*. Many TV programmes have been made following the progress of those that have made the move and the all too often failure of these adventurers but still they keep coming. It is always a favourite topic of conversation at the start of another winter season as to which bar or restaurant has failed, who has put their business up for sale and more intriguingly who has “done a runner”. Even after all the TV publicity and the all too often publicly disastrous attempts to “make it” and especially the programmes warning against the pitfalls of making such a move many still arrive unprepared. The image of an easy lifestyle in the sun with plenty of disposable income from a cash business and the apparent long hours of free time is obviously too strong to resist. The reality is long days, hard work, little disposable cash, problems with the legal system and falling foul of the law due to lack of language, local knowledge and more importantly

preparation. As one English operator put it “You would think that the message would have got through by now but obviously some people still don’t get it”.

At the time of conducting the research there were reportedly a few English bar owners who felt that there was something of an anti-British feeling towards them. The economic recession at that time was affecting all business, Spanish and English, and some negativity and apparent resentment had been directed towards foreigners in business. However, one English operator explained that this so called anti-British feeling was in fact self imposed by some of the British operators because they had demonstrated an outward arrogant attitude towards their Spanish hosts. They explained that “the ones that are doing the grumbling are the ones who have not been in the area for a long time but have had a good cheap life in the sun and now things are tough they are moaning”. There seems to be little patience or sympathy from either side of the community for this self-pitying attitude. One of the respondents also added plainly “they have made a choice and should get on with it after all life can’t be fantastic all the time and you have to take the lows with the highs”. Other sources explained that what the Spanish did not like was that some English operators appeared to employ only English staff and tradesmen rather than using the available equivalent Spaniard. The feeling was that these English workers would eventually leave the country and their earnings would not be returned into the local economy by way of spending. Unfortunately, there was also a reputation for not paying any taxes and running up debts that would not be paid before they leave the country. Whether this is correct or not the reputation of the English for disappearing and leaving behind a trail of debt is very strong and it can take a long period of trading to build up respect and shake off that stigma. A further point observed from both English and Spanish operators was that there was definitely less tolerance towards the recent influx of Eastern Europeans and Russians. There is also continued anti-foreigner feeling towards the ever-present problem of illegal immigrants particularly the Moroccans and Africans. In this context, according to one Spanish operator the English were the least of their problems.

One English operator spoken to had been in the area permanently for almost ten years and although they had run a successful business, according to them, they did not speak Spanish. The operator lived in a prominent English enclave, frequented English run bars and restaurants and did not feel the need to speak Spanish. They did however say that they did have some Spanish friends but they all spoke English. However, it transpired that they could translate a menu, understand, translate and pronounce the names of products in a supermarket

and various signs and instructions. When it was pointed out that on that basis they could actually read and understand quite a lot of Spanish they were surprised because for them “speaking” Spanish meant being able to string a sentence together and this was something they could not do. They did however deal with Spanish suppliers but this did not create any problems in the workplace as the suppliers either spoke English and they also employed either Spaniards or Spanish speakers. As a post-note, at a later point the operator expressed it had never occurred to them that they knew any Spanish at all. Now that it had been pointed out to them that they actually had a reasonable knowledge and library of words particularly for goods and services they were willing to try and use the words they were already familiar with and incorporate them more in their day to day life. This is a very positive attitude towards development and a step to be commended.

Amongst the English business people the reasons for not learning the language when they first arrived are common to all ages. This low level of language learning can also be linked to those from backgrounds with low levels of language exposure and limited higher education opportunities in earlier life. Firstly, there was a lack of confidence in attempting to speak compounded with a fear of getting it wrong and looking silly in front of their peers and new friends. Secondly, and the most recurring theme, was that the “need” to learn had been removed as “everyone speaks English”. Thirdly, they worked full time and they did not consider that they had the time to spare to take lessons and lessons were perceived to be expensive. As the people in their social circles did not speak Spanish either there was no encouragement from them but as previously discussed there is a problem for some people who do not want to appear different from their friends and the wider community. The strong sense of belonging and the social attachment it provides overrides any desire to become different and this applies to integrating through language learning. The combination of lack of confidence and the desire “to belong” to a socially similar group together with a fear of being an outcast is obviously too strong. It is also easy to connect these issues with socio-economic and educational background in that there will have been minimal success in their earlier life education which consequently has put psychological limitations in their aspirations. To reiterate, not only has the need to speak the language been completely removed but also there is an internal preconceived attitude that they lack any ability to learn.

4.4 *The Spanish Perspective*

Fundamental to traditional Spanish society is the strong sense of the family unit evidenced by society's general attitude to children and the treatment of the elderly. Children are welcome to accompany their parents everywhere however bad behaviour is not tolerated in public places and the offending child and parent will often be told so! The older and retired population of Spain seem well catered for and are obviously held with a certain level of respect from their families and the younger generations. The local councils give a number of concessions to the retired community and there are numerous facilities made available for their use. Retirees are called *los jubilados* being the Spanish word for retired persons so for the purposes of this section of the research both the Spanish and English retired persons will be referred to as "*los jubilados*". We have already established that the British seasonal tourist is treated very differently to permanent residents and the short term tourists from Britain in particular that they attract a greater level of tolerance from the Spanish for their apparent lack of language ability. There is no doubt that part of this tolerance and acceptance is due to the fact that the tourists provide an essential source of income over the winter months not only for the area but for the national economy as a whole. But they too are retired people and the Spanish put in them in the same category for respect as for their own retirees and are also referred to as "*los jubilados*" as opposed to "English".

The older generation are a distinctly visible section of the population. It is a very common sight to see older Spanish men and women out strolling or sitting on one of the many public seats either watching the world go by or interacting with both each other and the public at large. There also seems a general acceptance in Spanish society that it is the responsibility of families to look after their elderly and this is very much supported by the State and local authorities. Perhaps it is because of this apparent inherent respectfulness of their elderly that by extension the Spanish have a similar attitude to the English *jubilados* and a different attitude to that of the other sections of the ex-pat community. This theory was confirmed in a number of conversations over the period of research.

Every city, town or village however big or small has at least one *Hogar de Mayores* (Retired Persons Centre) also commonly referred to as the *la Pensionista*. This establishment is a central meeting place and activities centre for the local Spanish pensioners. It provides subsidised food and drink and a very pleasant surrounding for meeting friends and taking part

in activities. These centres provide a service for the older community by giving them a place for interaction, mental and social activity and also a place of security. At the time of visiting *la Pensionista* in Arroyo there was a timetable of activities including Yoga, Pilates, dominos, cards and dancing and music evenings. Amusingly one activity listed as “*Casteñuelas y bailando*” is translated either as “castanets and dancing” or “high spirits and dancing”! Obviously being old is not a restriction on enjoyment! English pensioners are also able to use the facilities provided at the *la Pensionista* although few seem to take up the option as they see it as Spanish pensioner privilege and consider their (English) presence something of an intrusion.

4.5 Spanish Businesses

Along the Arroyo main high street the majority of businesses are Spanish owned and run with very few obvious English businesses. Then slightly to the south off the main high street English owned and run businesses start to appear more readily and Spanish ones less so and continuing further down the hill towards the beach the more obvious this distinction becomes. However, there are a number of businesses run by Spaniards but designed to target and serve the English tourist. These businesses on the outside look English owned and operated but are in fact Spanish. The English owned businesses are predominantly bars, restaurants, some hairdressing salons, grocery stores and rental and property agents. There is also the odd car hire business and the usual smattering of internet and telephone services. The coastal areas are geared up for and do an excellent job at targeting the English tourist and at all the prominent advertising and promotional signage are English to attract that sector of the tourist market.

For the purpose of the research a number of Spanish business people were approached and asked for their contribution to the study. Unfortunately some showed a strange reluctance to offer much information on the subject and did not appear keen to voice an opinion or to say something could be reported in anything that looked slightly official. Three separate bar and restaurant owners were approached in order to ascertain opinion. One was selected as it was a restaurant that had a large English speaking clientele. The other two were bars run by Spanish and had a mixture of Spanish and English customers. They were asked if they would participate with the study and initially all were very receptive to the suggestion of helping with the research until the subject matter was explained in more depth. At this stage they all either made excuses about being too busy or refused to comment further. Even when it was explained that the research was totally confidential and evidence of University ethical

approval was produced they still refused to continue. All the refusals were done very politely and in a courteous manner but there was a definite feeling that had the subject being less specific on their customers and more general on EU policies and /or local politics for instance then perhaps the response would have been different. One respondent unintentionally clarified the situation and the apparent reluctance to participate as he said that without the English he wouldn't have much of a business and "times are tough". One can only draw a conclusion that the owners spoken to did not want to be seen to say anything that may upset any of their customers by giving any opinion in case it was construed as negative in any way. In one conversation it transpired that the reason for this reluctance was that the visitors they are being questioned about are their customers and consequently their livelihood. It would therefore be a foolish operator who openly criticises his source of income especially when times may be tough. We can only deduct from this that there may be that tolerance is waning by service providers but they are still financially tied as they have such a heavy reliance on the tourist market. But this is not proven. Further, in a small town and business community such as this, bad news can travel fast and the risk of losing business for any reason is too great especially in times of recession. Therefore, and on reflection, it was not really a great surprise that there was some resistance to provide any information from the few Spanish business owners approached. The topic of language and integration with the seasonal tourist appeared to be something of a taboo subject.

There were however more successful discussions with a number of other operators who highlighted and also confirmed some of the theories on the subject. The two main points that were raised by the seasonal tourists in their interviews were presented to Spanish participants.

- That when spoken to in Spanish, the response came back in English; and
- That as a result of this they (the English) felt that they were not given the opportunity to use (and so improve on) Spanish for instance when ordering food and drink or when attempting to pass the time of day.

After due consideration on these points the suggested answers put forward turned out to be practical and fair explanations. In the situation of one of the seasonal tourists (for example) trying to order something in Spanish in a bar (for example) it would be fair to assume that in many bars and restaurants the waiters (the subject of the issue) would be under time constraints. Their priority is to provide an efficient service to their customers and by

engaging in any lengthy conversation could be detrimental to their business. It was explained that the abruptness may, on the surface, appear rude and in some cases indifferent, however this is apparently totally unintentional and is merely due to whether they are busy or not. Another reason given for what is seen as a rude attitude or abruptness was that many Spaniards would assume (with perhaps good reason) that the English person they are dealing with would not be able to hold a conversation in Spanish. They also clarified this thinking that they (the Spaniard) reply in English in order to either prevent any misunderstandings or because they (the Spaniard) do not want to cause any undue embarrassment or discomfort to the English person. This is particularly in direct reference to dealings with *los jubilados*.

However, and by way of comparison, it was a different story when discussing attitudes towards the other sector of the ex-pat community. There was something of an air of less tolerance to those in the community that have lived permanently in that area for some years and yet did not appear to want to integrate and did not speak or attempt to speak any Spanish. This lack of language integration has proved to be detrimental for the seasonal tourists in some cases and the disadvantages have become more prominent recent times due to the change in everyone's economic circumstances. The Spanish attitude comes across as one of minor annoyance because as one put it "times are tough for all of us". There is obviously little room for tolerance of those English ex-pats who have chosen to live in Spain and who have reaped the benefits of a comfortable life for many years and yet are now complaining about their change in circumstances. However, it is also relevant to note that the Spanish have also reaped the benefits as a result of the presence of the English settlements directly or indirectly. They have also to some extent been party to the removal of that "need" for them to integrate and learn the language. It is therefore fair to equally apportion responsibility for the removal of the "need" to speak that language which has created barriers to integration as it is obvious that this has been a joint venture spurred on by economic greed on both sides of the community. Blame for any current problems such as lack of language skills among the English should not be apportioned unevenly as the Spanish community have also played a large part in creating the situation. The English community however should not feel complacent as they themselves have also made their money by promoting and perpetuating the image that there is no need to speak the language as "they all speak English anyway". This is a topic continues to attract considerable debate particularly amongst EU academics.

There was a general positive attitude towards those who attempted to communicate in Spanish and when someone makes an attempt at speaking Spanish this is generally well received. Further, comments from the Spaniards spoken to were also focussed on the fact that the *los jubilados* were considered to be, on the whole, a polite group of people. Further, they also expressed concern at the notion that they (Spaniards) may have upset or offended an English *jubilado* in any way. But taking a critical viewpoint we have to understand that the people under discussion are tourists. Tourists are an extremely valuable commodity particularly in this area. It is therefore highly unlikely that any business owner who relies on their patronage to survive is going to say anything negative about his customers in confidence or otherwise. Appearing to express concern as to whether they have offended someone and proclaiming that they are a pleasant group of people is at its worst a form of propaganda but at its best the truth.

Essentially, the fact that the group under discussion are *los jubilados* is to their advantage as the Spanish respect for the older person extends beyond a purely nationality criteria. It was also very well understood that those who came to that area for the Northern winter months are not necessarily wealthy but that they come from normal working backgrounds and were using their savings to enjoy their autumn years. Their level of spending power obviously reflected this. The Spanish are also well aware that for many years the cost of living in Spain was much cheaper than most Northern European countries and they have capitalised on this through tourism. It can never be a problem that when a large group are happy to spend their winters putting money into the Spanish economy rather than the English economy. Although with the economic downturn in 2009 the value of the British Pound against the Euro has meant that the English have less to spend but this does not seem to deter them from making the trip nor does it stop them from enjoying themselves. This annual trip in the winter months has now become an integral part of the lives of many elderly English and regardless of exchange rates and economic recession it just means that they have had to make minor adjustments to their budgets and lifestyle accordingly. It does of course have a direct effect on the amount of money they are able to put into the Spanish economy and there have been noticeable reductions in the takings in local bars and restaurants for instance. Even considering this decline in spending power there does not seem to be any change in attitude towards the seasonal tourist as it is well acknowledged that everyone is suffering financially.

One business operator who spoke excellent English said that they were often called upon to help their clients with such things as making phone calls to Spanish authorities, helping with

translation of instructions or explaining meanings of certain words their clients had seen on items in shops. They had assisted in situations from dealing with doctors to helping when they had bought the wrong item or even names of products. When challenged on this and asked if they felt that they are being taken for granted and should their customers take things into their own hands and learn the language they replied that they didn't mind as it had become part of the service. It was also put to them that by being helpful to their clients and providing a translation service they were in essence perpetuating the problem of lack of language learning. Their clients would not see the need to learn the language because they could come to them for any assistance. They responded by acknowledging that the problem did exist but as far as they were concerned it was only a minor issue and for them it was more of a problem amongst the permanent ex-pat residents. Frankly, the nature of their business meant that they had a large English speaking clientele, and being critical, they are hardly going to ignore their customers and run the risk of losing business. A further comment they made was that many of their customers had been coming to this area for many, many years and friendships had developed and by providing an intermediary service to their clients they had built up levels of trust and consequently friendships. Again, the fact that their clients were in the main *los jubilados* made a big difference. As they were older people they are seen as perhaps more vulnerable than the younger compatriots so the level of respect and the willingness to help in times of even minor crisis is higher. It was also acknowledged that due to age or education factors many of their clients do not have the confidence to learn or try and speak and so they turn to someone in whom they know will not take advantage or ridicule their predicament. It was also important for the operator that they could be in a position to help should the need arise. This attitude was one that came through in other conversations with people who through their work were connected directly with *los jubilados*. The protection and willingness to be a surrogate communicator is in effect cossetting the seasonal tourists and although this is done with the highest of good intentions it also contributes to the removal of the "need" to learn and so be independent and to integrate.

Also there was a general opinion expressed that *los jubilados* were polite to their Spanish hosts and rarely caused problems. This is a recurring comment but this group of people are tourists and without them there would be no business. It was apparent that all the businesses regardless of whether they targeted the English community or not had nothing bad to say about their customers, the seasonal tourists. But then why would they? There was a distinct feeling that there could well be underlying issues that are not openly discussed but in times of

economic restrictions it would be financial suicide to make any contrary or anti-British claims. To be frank, business is business and in times of economic restraint money is welcome from anyone.

4.6 *Chance Encounters*

During the period of research in Spain there were a number of chance encounters which have been included in this work. Many of these occasions were in supermarkets, shops and in such places where there was everyday interaction between the seasonal tourist and a member of the local Spanish community. A casual remark or comment on an incident invited comment and response so it was an interesting insight into the thinking of the Spanish community and the interaction and reaction of different people to different situations. By way of example some scenarios are noted below:

Scenario One

At a supermarket checkout an English lady, who obviously couldn't speak any Spanish (or didn't want to) was having some difficulty explaining to the cashier that she wanted a bottle of vodka. The bottles were in a locked cabinet and had to be requested. The Spanish cashier understood the request for vodka but the communication started to break down when she wanted to know what size and brand the lady wanted. Eventually with some persistence and patience on behalf of the cashier the whole thing was sorted out but in the meantime the queue had grown and there were some grumblings of discontent from the queue about the delay – from both Spaniards and English! The cashier apologised for the delay to the next few customers. The author, at her turn, took an opportunity and asked the cashier if it was a problem when the tourists didn't speak Spanish. Her reply was that it wasn't so much as a problem as she spoke and understood a little English as she worked in a tourist area it was essentially part of her job but sometimes when she was busy it could be frustrating. With some apparent afterthought she then added "for both parties". She also seemed keen to add, probably not to offend the author (being English and therefore presumed a tourist) or anyone else, that on the whole the tourists were polite.

Scenario Two

The area just below the main Arroyo high street and amongst the high rise apartment blocks sits the *Iglesia Virgen del Carmen* one of the many Catholic churches in the area. It is a

relatively new building being only about ten years old and is the centre of many activities for the local community, Spanish and English whether Catholic or Anglican. The church is built on the hillside so has a lower ground floor housing among other things function rooms, classrooms and a beautiful Columbarium for interring ashes. A chance discussion with a Spaniard who was connected with church also added some interesting points. There was a significant attendance of English at the church for Sunday services particularly seasonal tourists. This was probably because the Mass was conducted in an ad hoc way as far as language was concerned as it wasn't exactly half Spanish and half English but enough of a mix so that everyone could follow the proceedings. The point was made, correctly, that if you were a regular church goer, and especially Catholic, the Mass was fundamentally the same in structure so could be followed no matter which language you spoke. This factor probably attracted some seasonal tourists to attend the services. Essentially, from the Church's point of view, it should make no odds whether some of the congregation can speak the local language or not as attendance and belief are much considered more important.

More interestingly, the lower ground floor of the Church housed the Chapel of St Joseph which is an High Anglican church specifically set up for the English Anglican community. Although this was not open at the time of the visit, information is that it was set up as a joint venture between the Catholic and High Anglican churches in order to best serve the English community. It is by all accounts well attended with a mix of the more by permanent residents of the area and the seasonal tourists. The two religious communities often join together in events and at festival times and regardless of any barriers that there may be in the language members of both communities attend and get involved.

Scenario three

The author was seated at a bar in central *Arroyo* but slightly off the main high street. The clientele at the bar were exclusively Spanish and the author was the only obviously foreigner there at that time. Taking the opportunity to continue observation and research the author was working on her laptop when the waiter approached. The ensuing conversation was in Spanish and the author requested a white coffee and a local drink called *Patcharan*. When the drinks arrived the waiter enquired in Spanish as to whether she was working. The author then commenced explaining in Spanish a brief of the research to which the waiter, looking slightly shocked or even bemused, said he hadn't expected an English person to speak Spanish. From this came a number of results. Firstly, he had, on hearing her accent, assumed correctly that

the author was English; secondly she had ordered a very Spanish drink leading him to believe that she either worked or lived in the area, as a normal tourist would not be familiar with the drink; and thirdly (and most significantly) had not expected her to be able to hold a conversation in Spanish. Even with the assumption of working or living in the area did not imply that she could speak Spanish because the bar was some way of the main high street. They did not encounter English tourists very much and the ones that they did have contact with normally either spoke very little or no Spanish at all apart from being able to order basic drinks. The only value from this conversation is that there appears to be a broad assumption that the English do not speak Spanish at all and there is no differentiation between tourists and those ex-pats who live or work in the area.⁷⁹

4.7 Availability of Language Lessons

Some of the respondents in the target group reported that they had previously attempted to learn Spanish by either attending lessons in Britain or by using audio lessons all with mixed success. Those who had had some lessons in the past to learn the basics of Spanish had not continued for a variety of reasons. Lessons provided by the local Education Authorities in Britain are low cost but are only over the autumn and winter period from September through to April or May during the academic year. This time slot unfortunately coincides with the winter holiday period when the seasonal tourists are in Spain. Respondents who had at some stage attended lessons in Britain said that they had in the past started lessons but gave up as they were unable to continue due to their holiday commitments. Also, if they did attend lessons in Spain over the winter months they felt that they would lose most of their learned knowledge over the summer months back in Britain. Any progress at the start of the following winter would be too many steps back as they did not feel they had the power of retention without regular exercise or use of the language. This, many agreed, was part of the problem of learning at an old age. Finally, another reason for not attending lessons in Spain was that often it clashed with their other pastimes, sports and the many social activities they were involved with. In other words, they were too busy!

Lessons through language schools in Britain are available but the respondents did not consider this an option not only because of the cost involved but they felt that those types of

⁷⁹ In order to avoid identification of the persons involved in the conversation and the place has been changed slightly. This is essentially a combination of two separate encounters and conversations but the outcome is the same.

lessons are directed at younger people. One of the recurring themes that arise from the target group is that Spanish lessons are expensive and not readily available. Lessons are available at many language schools in Spain and a quick Google search on the internet for “Spanish languages courses *Benalmádena*” produced a huge range of options. Those listed on the first page were established schools and specialised in intensive or full time courses. They were targeting foreigners who would come to Spain specifically to learn the language and stay with a host family. One website for Apple Languages had a course in *Benalmádena* for the 50 plus age range but a two week full time course was €497 for the tuition.⁸⁰ Another school advertised over 50’s classes for two weeks at €660 for tuition only and was based in *Malaga* the same school also offered private lessons once a week for twenty weeks for €690.⁸¹ The third website reviewed called Erasmus Languages (and should not be confused with the EU funded Erasmus programme) also provided a two week intensive course for the over 50’s at €660.⁸² This was a selection of the first three listed schools offering Spanish language courses in *Benalmádena* and there were many more pages of similar results. So, language lessons are available through many schools and there are specific lessons for the over 50’s but these courses are expensive to the seasonal tourists. In order to consider whether the effort of attending classes for two solid weeks, time and travel and the cost involved there would have been a reasonable benefit or reward. Many of the respondents counted themselves out of doing these courses not only for the cost of the initial outlay but they felt that such courses were really for younger retirees who perhaps had only started to holiday in the area and so would have a longer time to benefit and reap the reward for their endeavours.

The EU claims to promote adult learning through the Life Long Learning Initiative and the Erasmus Language and Education system has adult education listed as one of the main objectives of the programme.⁸³

Adult learning is a vital component of EU education policies, as it is essential to competitiveness and employability, social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development across Europe. The challenge is to provide opportunities for all, especially the most disadvantaged groups who need learning most.

⁸⁰ Information from Apple Languages at www.applelanguages.com. Prices as at 2010.

⁸¹ Information from CESA Languages at www.cesalanguages.com. Prices as at 2010.

⁸² Information from www.erasmus-language.com prices as at 2010.

⁸³ http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc58_en.htm

The Erasmus programme runs very successful foreign exchange programmes for students across the EU however these courses are directed at either university students or those wishing to attend an intensive language course. There is also the Grundtvig programme which provides practical support for the Erasmus programme in relation adult learning.⁸⁴ However Grundtvig is not a teaching programme but is designed to promote language learning by providing assistance and encouragement for the development of systems and processes. On a review of the available information on the Europa website the information on “adult learning” only made reference to those adults who would benefit from language learning by professional advancement in the work place or were in education. There is no obvious provision for those older “adults” who may need language learning in order to support their current living situation or allow them to integration into another community. There is a distinct gap for this age group and for those who are with not working in a professional environment or in education. In light of the EU policies on integration and especially in relation to language learning the importance put on “life long learning” seems only to be for those who can produce a long term financial and economic benefit to their own country or the EU as a whole. If integration is so important then shouldn’t there be some support or system in order assist smaller less able groups?

4.8 Newspapers

In order to ascertain the availability of language lessons the local newspapers were scanned for advertisements for lessons. See *Table 2 – Local Newspapers for the Costa del Sol area showing language lessons advertisements* for results of investigation into availability of lessons and costs. Currently there appears to be little data available on language learning for the target group in the area under study but from initial enquires it seems that there are some small (Spanish) Government subsidised classes available but these classes do not seem all that well publicised. It is the aim of this study to try and ascertain the availability of any learning facilities and the existence of learning establishments and more importantly, the willingness for the individual to take up any language learning if offered. To establish whether there are facilities for learning a review of the available local newspapers was undertaken. In addition to the normal newspapers there are also a number of free newspapers in English and Spanish. The review looked at the advertising of lessons in the newspapers and any articles that dealt with language and learning.

⁸⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc86_en.htm

The area is well serviced by English language newspapers. The normal British newspapers are readily available together with a good supply of local newspapers printed in English. There are many local free newspapers all carrying various news items from Britain, Spain and Europe also have extensive advertising from English and Anglo/Spanish businesses and other services targeting the English community. The information and news items in the newspapers vary depending on their target market.

The newspaper with the best local coverage is the *Sur in English*. The newspaper costs only €1 and is also printed in German. The paper covers national items of news concerning the Spanish Government and economy together with local political and economic issues. The local news is well reported with emphasis on the activities of the *el Ayuntamiento*, criminal and police reports and good information on the many clubs and associations in the area. There are also good articles on living in Spain with legal and health advice and general advice on matters such as common pitfalls when purchasing a property. Like all the free newspapers in English its target market is the more permanent resident community and seems to focus on the area directly on the coast particularly *Fuengirola*, *Estepona* and *Marbella*. The more hillside suburbs seem rarely mentioned. The newspaper has an extensive classified section and carried the most adverts for Spanish language lessons out of all the newspapers reviewed. Fifteen adverts were recorded for Spanish language with others noted offering tuition in other European languages. Out of the 15 adverts, five were language schools and ten offering private tuition and appeared to be from individuals rather than established schools or educational institutions.

In direct competition to *Sur* newspaper is *Costa del Sol News* which has the added advantage of being free but is only printed in English. Again, the content is very informative with coverage of important English news but focuses mainly on the local Spanish news. It also has an extensive “Community Notice Board” with useful information and contact numbers for police, doctors, hospitals, libraries, schools and other essential services. As with *Sur* it is directed at the more permanent resident and those who live along the coast as noted before. Listed on the “Community Notice Board” there was only one notice for Spanish lessons described as “Spanish for Foreigners”. There was also a similar advert for “English classes” as it is assumed this would be aimed at Spanish community. This seemed a little unusual as

this is an English newspaper with what would be an English speaking readership. There were also three adverts in the classified section all offering private in-home tuition.

The other free newspapers *Euroweekly News* and *The News* provide similar news items to the others although on a smaller scale. The latter of the two gives small snippets from newspapers across the EU area and is not specifically focused on Britain. It does carry the usual extensive advertising for businesses and services to the public but the services on offer tend to cover a more general area. *The News* did not have any adverts in the classified section or elsewhere for language tuition. *Euroweekly News* again carried a combination of local, national and international content and the usual business and services advertisements. It has a small classified section and in the edition reviewed it carried only three adverts for language lessons with all offering private and in-home tuition. Interestingly, there was one advert for learning Russian and three for Spanish.

There are only a few local Spanish language newspapers for the local area as there seems to be a preference for national press such *El País* and *El Mundo* being two of the larger national papers. This is in direct contrast to the availability of the English language newspapers for the area. There is apparently no Spanish equivalent for *Costa del Sol News* as the national papers have regional editions. The free newspapers in Spanish are similar to their English counterparts in that they provide local news but do not carry the level of advertising and by comparison have limited relevant content.

Free Spanish newspapers included *Vecinos* (in English “Neighbours”) which is similar in content to the *Sur in English* but does not have the same level of advertising. There was one article in the edition reviewed for free classes for “improving English” and these classes are to be held at two centres and were free to the public (See *Figure 7*). *La Voz de Benalmádena* (The Voice of Benalmádena) or *La Voz* for short, also free, is a small issue and seems to be more of an information paper on local council activities. In both papers some articles appear to be more promotional items for the local Ayuntamiento on issues of accountability and transparency for public information. It did not have a classified section. Also similar content and structure was in another free Spanish language newspaper *Benalmádena Directo*. Again, this focused on the local issues and had no classified advertising.



Figure 7 - "Mas de 100 personas participan en un curso para mejorar el ingles"
Vecinos 15 October 2010.

Article reporting the new language classes for inter-cambio and beginners at la Pensionista in Arroyo.

A number of advertisements in *Table 2* were taken as a sample from the available newspapers and anonymous enquiries made requesting information on prices and types of lessons available. To maintain the anonymity of this research none of the teachers or schools that were contacted is identified and the results are shown in *Table 3 – Results of questions and results from advertisements*. See examples of advertisements in *Figure 8 - Classified advertisements for Spanish language tuition from Costa del Sol News and Sur in English*. The questions asked were consistent across the sample and were used to establish a number of factors including:

1. Whether group or private lessons were available;
2. Size of groups if applicable;
3. Cost of lessons – individual/private and group;
4. Cost of in-home lessons available, and;
5. Location of teacher/school (if applicable)

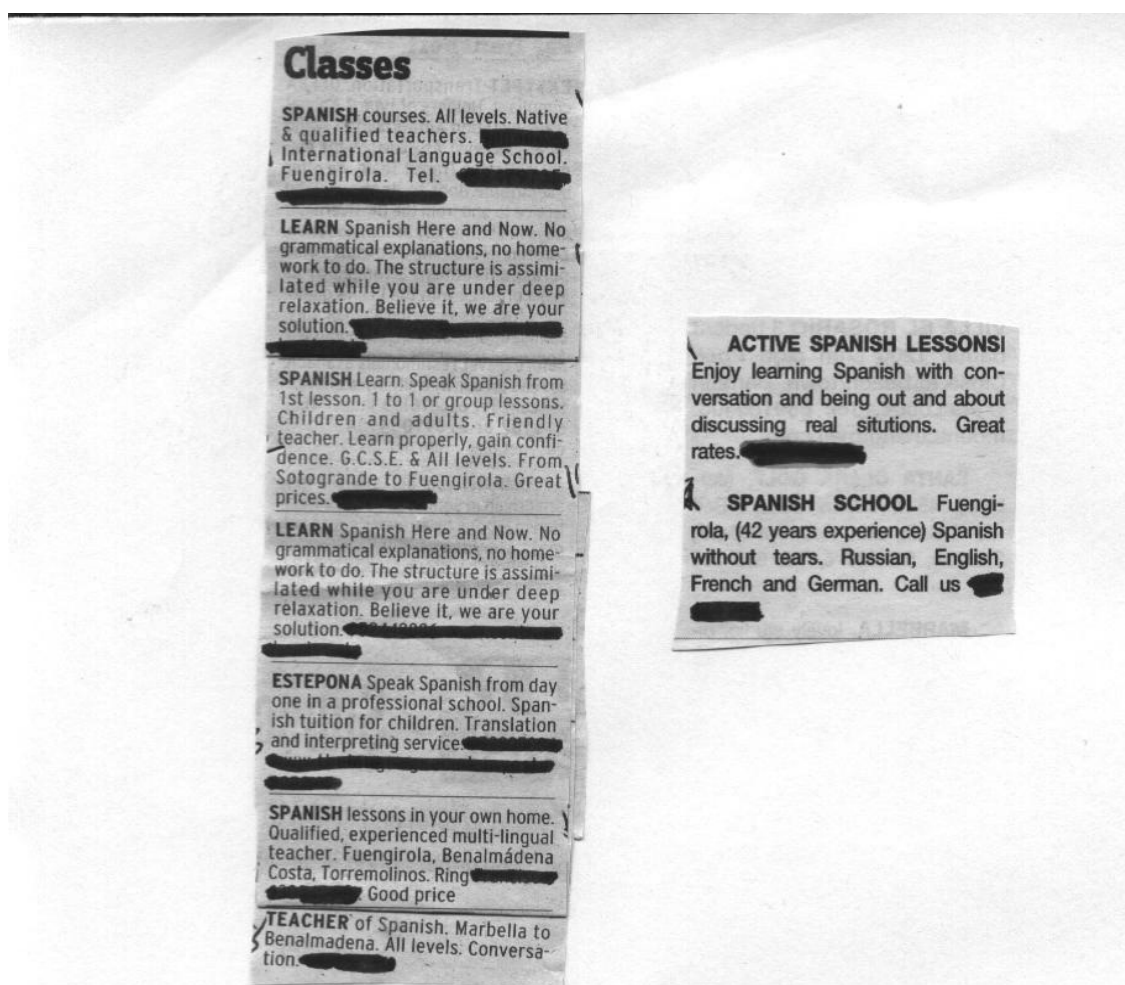


Figure 8 - Classified advertisements for Spanish language tuition from Costa del Sol News and Sur in English.

The research showed that the going rate for an hour of Spanish tuition from the sample taken to be €20 to €25 per hour for private and €10 per hour for group lessons. Not all the classes or groups were English. One had an existing small group of “mixed people” but did not elaborate on nationalities. The other had a group of English and Eastern Europeans. The schools offered a free initial ½ hour “lesson” to establish the level of knowledge, understanding and speed of uptake in order to assess which class would be best suited. Two private advertisers said that they preferred to teach in-home as they did not have a classroom or did not work from their own home. All those contacted were based on the coastal urban area and although travelling time was not added to the cost one teacher said that the lessons were 50 minutes as opposed to the normal one hour of teaching. Also, there was a limit on the distance to travel for in-home which would depend on the amount of regular weekly lessons or the group size. The indication was that the tutor was happy to travel within approx 10km

of their base. This would include *Arroyo* but some expressed a little concern at the distance and driving time and the impression was that they would prefer clients a little closer to their home base.

4.9 Lessons

El Ayuntamiento is responsible for the running of all services and facilities in the direct area and now provides both free and low cost lessons to the public. The officers at *el Ayuntamiento* were extremely helpful and informative when approached for information. The local Council obviously recognise that there is a need to assist with the language issue and an English translator is in residence at the offices of *el Ayuntamiento* in *el Pueblo*. The service is available to help with any enquiries that the tourist or ex-pat residents may have and is free of charge and on a first come first served basis or appointments can be made. At the time of writing the current incumbent had been instrumental (and given financial support from the *el Ayuntamiento*) in instigating a series of free and low cost lessons for both English and Spanish speakers. This service is now reasonably well publicised and many tourists already know of the service and speak highly of the attention and information they have received.

On visiting the offices of *el Ayuntamiento* in *el Pueblo* information was readily available on these classes and also the rationale behind the set up. Essentially, the *el Ayuntamiento* is well aware that there is a need to provide some sort of language services for both Spanish, English residents and long term tourists alike. They understand that the cost of private lessons can be prohibitive for a large sector of the population. More importantly the area relies on its tourist industry as it is a major part of the regional and national GDP. The promotion of these services not only increases the public satisfaction with the local administration but is also assisting two main sectors of the public.

Another source of lessons was provided through *el Ayuntamiento*. Although not falling strictly under the “private” heading, these lessons involved only a minor cost so were not under the same classification as “free”. The classes were held in a local building in central *Arroyo* three times a week, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday at 5.30pm. The charge for these lessons was €50 for those registered on the *Padrón* or €100 for those not registered. The course runs from October through to June and claims to deal with different levels of knowledge and understanding. The structure is to provide good basic lessons on practical Spanish with a development towards grammar and verb construction. It is for those people

who wish to become more fluent speakers rather than being able to simply get by with a few phrases. As the classes are fee paying they are open to everyone and there is a reasonable cross section of the English community. The patronage does however lean towards the younger of the retiree age bracket and most seem to be permanent resident rather than the seasonal tourist. Again, these sessions, as with most activities in this area, are treated as not just a class to learn but also it is one of mental exercise and social interaction.

There were two options for free lessons. The first is set up along the lines of inter-cambio whereby couples or groups would speak, interact and correct each other and in doing so assist with language confidence and improvement. These are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10am for approximately one hour. However, these sessions apparently often run on well over that time. The location for all these lessons was at *la Pensionista* in central Arroyo.

The intercambio session observed was very well attended. All the tables were occupied by two to four persons deep in conversation and very attentive. Everyone was either speaking or listening; dictionaries were on the tables, pens and note pads used whilst carefully explaining words and expressions. The organiser explained that there was a great cross section of both communities attending these sessions. The Spanish range in age and vary in their reasons for attendance from wanting to improve their own level of English, a desire to help an English speaker learn more, to improve their employment prospects or in a few cases simply wanting to make different friends. The English tended to be in the retiree age bracket but had similar reasons for attendance. Attending such events is also a good source of mental stimulation particularly for the older segment of the group. It is well recognised that social and mental stimulation for older people is beneficial to their own well being.

These classes also create a greater level of integration between groups that otherwise may not have mixed and certainly would never have spoken to each other due to the language barrier. There exists a growing demand for both communities to be able to communicate better with each other and, especially for younger people, the desire to integrate more. Furthermore, from the Spanish perspective, the ability to communicate and develop English friends and connections could also be beneficial in the long term either economically or even by improving employment prospects. The latter perhaps carrying more relevance as at the time of writing unemployment in Spain was extremely high.

Although the provision of these free lessons is a credit to the *el Ayuntamiento* and they seem to be well attended the only negative aspect evident was the start time of 10am. This is the middle of the morning so prohibitive to the average working person. However, these sessions are intended to attract the retired person or those without time constraints. It was also pointed out that if the time had been more suitable to the working person ie during the long Spanish three hour lunch break, then the session would probably be over subscribed. The time slot therefore was specifically set to avoid this and attract the right target groups.

The second free set of lessons was targeted specifically at English retirees. Still at the beginners level they were held in a nearby apartment building on Thursdays at 5pm for approximately one hour. These lessons were designed to provide a more practical tool in communication by concentrating on day to day activities rather than the more structured lessons teaching grammar and verbs for instance. Participants would be taught how to use certain phrases and questions, how to understand replies and then to counter-reply. As is often the case when learning a language we can ask questions for directions etc but struggle to understand the reply. The group was also well attended and had a good gender mix although they all tended to lean to the “younger” end of the retiree scale with a few that were classed as permanent residents but had not been resident in the country that long. Again this was also an opportunity not only to learn the language but to be able to communicate with their neighbours more effectively. The driver for those attending was not a desire to become fluent but to be able understand and to be understood should the need arise.

Table 2 – Local Newspapers for the Costa del Sol area showing language lessons advertisements

Newspaper	Language	Content	Adverts	Location	Lessons on offer
Sur in English (Free)	English (also available in Spanish and German)	Extensive local news and some European news.	15 (5 schools and 10 private tuition)	Calahonda, Fuengirola and San Pedro	Group, private, Language schools and in home lessons Intensive, conversation and for children
Costa del Sol News (€1)	English	Extensive local news and some European news.	5 (2 in Community Notices and 3 in Classified)	All based in and around Fuengirola	Community groups and in home lessons, “Spanish for Foreigners”, conversation and for children
Euroweekly News (Free)	English	European news with local content	3	All in Fuengirola	Group, private and in home lessons Intensive, conversation, business and for children
The News (Free)	English	Compilation of European headlines. No local content	None	n/a	n/a
Vecinos (“Neighbours”) (Free)	Spanish	All local content for Spanish readership	No classified advertising but one article on free lessons	Arroyo de la Meil	Intercambio with local Spanish wanting to learn English aimed at improvers or those with some knowledge.

All newspapers dated 14 October 2010.

Table 3 – Results of questions and results from advertisements

Question	1	2	3	4	5
Private advert sample 1	Yes, both	Min 2 Max 6	Private €20 per hr Group €120 per month for 3 x 1 hr sessions per week	No in-home offered	Fuengirola *
Private a advert sample 2	Yes, both	Min 3 Max 6	Private €25 per hr Group cost depended on size but 6 people approx €10 per hr	In home only offered	Fuengirola * But service in home
Private advert sample 3	Yes both but preferred private	4 per group	Private €25 per hr (in-home lessons only)	Only in-home offered	Calahonda *** But service in home
School advert sample 4	Yes both but specialised in classes	Min 6 Max 10	Private €25 per hr Group cost depended on size of group approx €10	Not offered	Estepona **
School advert sample 5	Yes both	Min 6 Max 12	Private €25 per hr Group cost depended on size of group approx €10	Not offered	Fuengirola *

* Fuengirola is 5km east from Arroyo but there is a good train service every ½ hour and it takes approx 20 minutes.

** Estepona is 54km east and the tutor contacted felt it would not be practical to travel.

*** Calahonda is approximately 8km east.

None of the advertisers were in the Benalmádena area.

Chapter Five

5.1 *IRM*

The involvement of the EU and the implications of the rights of EU citizens as to freedom of movement throughout the Union, together with the harmonising of welfare, pensions and health care, have had significant implications on the movement and freedom of the current generation of retirees. It is without doubt created opportunities for the average retiree that would, only two or three decades ago have been available to a more selected few. Therefore the implication is that the enlargement of the EU and the Single European Act 1986 has, by removing the obstacles to freedom of movement, facilitated the increase in IRM.⁸⁵ Although there is substance in this argument however IRM by the British has been in existence before the passing of the Single European Act. There has been a positive direct effect on the increase in IRM but it is not the single influencing factor.

Since the successive enlargements of the EU there have been more options available for retirees as to where they wish to spend their winter months. However, there has always been a draw for Northern Europeans to the Southern Member States (even before their entry to the EU) simply on two crucial factors – economic and climate. There is third factor of the attraction of immersing in different culture and way of life but this is directed at the more permanent resident and those that choose to live in the interior and not those who gravitate towards the more tourist coastal areas.⁸⁶

The modern post-war European economy has facilitated a change in lifestyle options for many sectors of the community. Increased value of many traditional working class occupations and subsequent pension and healthcare rights has created a new era for the retiree. For many current retirees they are now financially and socially worlds away from the status of their own parents and are able to move freely to other European countries for retirement. This Europeanisation of retirees has created a new stratum on the socio-economic ladder where the members of this stratum now contribute greatly to the Spanish economy. As already discussed, the most significant factor of IRM has been the increase in disposable income and availability of State and private pensions to assist in their retirement years. The EU

⁸⁵ A Williams, R King, and T Warnes, "A Place in the Sun: International Retirement Migration from Northern to Southern Europe," *European Urban and Regional Studies* 4, no. 2 (1997)

⁸⁶ Ibid .

harmonisation of healthcare has also become a significant factor for this demographic through the *European Health Insurance Card* providing the surety that they can access the health system in another EU country and not have to worry about the rising cost of travel and health insurance for the older generation. With this and advantage of better pensions than their forebears overseas retirement living is more accessible and better than ever before. Even the 2009 credit crunch and ensuing recession does not seem to have deterred the hardened seasonal tourist from making their winter pilgrimage. Some may have suffered and may not have as much money to spend but they alter their budgets and lifestyle accordingly. It will take more than fluctuating exchange rates and an economic “blip” to stop this group of seasonal tourists from making their winter pilgrimage. The EU therefore has created an internal playground for its retired citizens by restricting their options to travel outside the EU as they would not have the security of the EU health insurance and limited access to their money. A security blanket or security fence?

Movement throughout the EU is easy for an EU citizen. A multitude of airlines operate from even the smallest of airports and the competition can be fierce in order to corner the tourist market. The decision now is not when you can afford to go but with which airline, from which airport and which is the cheapest option. The Schengen Zone has also removed the need for passport control (except for returning to Britain) making inter-EU travel easy. This eliminates another “stress” factor for our British retirees for their travel to Spain and of course the language stress factor is also removed because “they all speak English”.

5.2 *British Euro-Skepticism*

There is no longer a “Great” in Britain. The country has lost its industries and has no real solid manufacturing industry to speak of; it relies heavily on the financial support and advantages of its membership of the EU and is regarded by other Member States as being an overcrowded, expensive and dirty country. Immigration continues to grow and the British public illogically often pin the source of the problem on the fact that they are members of the EU even though it is a British political domestic issue. The blinkered view of the average Briton is that they are somehow at the brunt end of the benefit scale under the EU system. They fail to appreciate the benefits that they as a nation have now come to take for granted and continue to complain about how the EU interferes and costs money to support. Little attention is given to the reality that Britain is a geographically small but heavily populated country and it can no longer support itself financially. It is only consider a part of the world

political scene because of historic connections and the fact that it has a record of excellent international diplomacy and then perhaps this is only due to the expertise of the British political spin-doctors.

It is without doubt an advantage to the British that they are part of the EU and being able to capitalise on the benefits of membership such as freedom of movement without a visa, welfare and health assistance and being able to continue to draw their pension whilst “abroad”. There is strong Euro-sceptic rhetoric among many Britons and a general opinion that Britain would be better off out of the EU. Many of the respondents had a strong opinion that they had no direct benefit of being part of the EU and in fact blamed the sinking Sterling against the Euro as being a problem of the EU and failed to see it on the wider global market. The conditions membership under the Treaty of Rome and the possible disastrous financial impact of exiting the EU aside, if Britain did leave the EU and relinquish the benefits of membership this would have serious impact on the seasonal tourist such as:

Visas – Prior to joining the EU and in the early days of tourism Spanish authorities did not really have a structured system for their tourists. Long term stays were common without any repercussions and the foreigners became part of the development of the area into the tourist attraction that it is today. However, if the visa requirement was back in force all tourists would require a visa and not only is there a cost involved there is also the processing application which takes time. Each time a visit is made a visa will have to be applied for. Under the old scheme a visa would only allow three months of continuance residence and then would have to be renewed or a new visa applied for again. There would be no exceptions as immigration rules have tightened in recent years due to the problem with illegal immigration and flouting the visa rules would not be treated lightly. Over extending a stay beyond a visa limit may result in refusal to issue another visa.

Private Travel and Health Insurance – British visitors to the rest of Europe would need to purchase their own travel and health insurance as they would no longer be covered under the *European Health Insurance Card* scheme. Private health insurance can be expensive for the older person especially those who may have medical problems. Further they may not be able to obtain their own medication in their host country as easily as they can now.

There are also other implications such as not being able to draw on their pension if they are away from Britain for extended periods of time as this would imply that they are not a permanent resident in their own country. With regards to the health insurance, some respondents have said that they no longer travel outside the EU because they cannot afford the travel insurance due to their age and infirmity. If the British were restricted in their freedom of movement there would be a distinct drop in the numbers of tourists, not necessarily the short term tourist, but the longer term seasonal tourists. The drop would, without question, affect the local economy and there would be repercussions in the Spanish community. However, the movement of people can be a fluid object and it would be a reasonable guess that the gap left by the British would quickly be filled by other Northern Europeans. Their absence may initially be noticed but ultimately not missed.

By removing the British from the scene the Spanish economy would suffer in the short term with a drop in the tourist levels but it without doubt eventually it would pick up when the gap began to be filled by other nationalities. Depending which nationality became dominant would therefore dictate the new “lingua franca” for the area. English may therefore drop out of necessity and another take its place particularly as research shows that other Northern Europeans have a tendency to speak Spanish, socialise more and are more inclined to integrate with their hosts. If that were the case would the lingua franca of the area turn to another language such as Dutch or German or would Spanish return?

The arrogance of the British therefore is hollow. If they did disappear from this area of Spain the fluidity of movement of people within the EU and the supplies and demands of economic sustainability would in the long term fill the gap. Although not easily replaced they are not, as they seem to regard themselves, totally indispensable. To be frank, the Spanish would not really care where their tourists came from as long as they maintained their economy.

5.3 *Integration and Ambivalence*

Regardless of how or why the English language has become acceptable or dominant in the world today the British still consider that they have no need to integrate with language to the extent that their EU neighbours have. Is the history of colonialism and the English language and subsequent corporatism adoption enough to be good reason to explain why the British seem ambivalent about integrating in the EU?

Anyone unfamiliar with the main tourist areas in Spain could be forgiven for thinking that they were in a strange sort of “English” theme park. This is where proprietors seem to have gone to the extreme in an attempt to re-create English pubs in order to serve English beer to their English customers. Their target market is not interested in Spanish food or culture, they are only in Spain for the weather and the English Pub provides them with a “safe” place where they don’t have to eat the foreign food and of course they all speak English. These tourists are limited by their own educational background and typify the lower end socio-economic scale. They are limited by their lack of social aspiration and their fear of being different to their friends and that they will no longer “belong” to their own social group by their actions. They do the same as everyone else because they either know no different or because they do not have the courage to become different. The strength of the “sense of belonging” to a social group is so strong that it can convince and manipulate a persons reasoning and desires to such an extent that for them to be “different” would be too big a step to take.

The British are ambivalent about integrating and rely on the fact that because of the international acceptance of the English language in the corporate world then they don’t need to bother learning another language anyway. They do not have the inherent need to integrate as they have a history of leading colonisation which probably goes some way to explain their general ambivalence about integrating in any country in the EU? This is one of the reasons that the British tend to congregate in the same areas and creating their own enclaves. The development of the *urbanizaciones* on the coast that house mainly the permanent ex-pat community has now created issues of integration and exclusion particularly for retired migrants. The communities provide a relatively safe environment for the older person but the lack of interaction and integration with the Spanish community around them ultimately leads to feelings of exclusion and isolation. The main problem is not due to lack of facilities or health but that the isolation is caused by the language barrier. There is little integration between the two communities and therefore there is little encouragement for either side to try and build any social relationship and break down the integration and isolation fence. The blame should not be totally pushed onto the introverted attitude of the English because they cannot speak Spanish, but the Spanish community who have assisted in creating a ghetto by removing the need to speak Spanish should share that blame. By continuing to foster this predicament both communities are perpetuating the situation and it is doubted that either party

are willing to make any steps to encourage and build social relationships with their neighbours.⁸⁷

The British community is constantly criticised for the dominance of the English language in their own communities in this part of Spain. But there are significant factors that have driven the development and acceptance of this situation and this does not come, as is presumed, solely from the British front. The main driver has been the development of the tourist and subsequent ex-pat and retirement communities that have relied on the ability of the Spanish to speak English and remove the “stress” of the language barrier. From this there are now distinct drivers that challenge integration and these can be identified as:

- The Spanish willingness to speak English over and above their own language;
- Lack of challenge (on language) from the English;
- Subsequent lack of willingness to learn therefore leading to apathy;
- No encouragement from Spanish community for language integration;
- Social groupings – “us and them”;
- Spanish do not see the English as long term residents as such they are not considered valued for long term relationships or friendships;

The willingness by the Spanish to speak English over and above their own language pushes their own language into a subordinate role. It appears that there is little encouragement for the tourist to learn Spanish which then impacts on social integration. But even though the Spanish language is now subordinate to English, it is the British themselves that are in fact subordinate to the Spanish as they are in a vulnerable position. Effectively, economic and social history has created and driven the development of this area and the community has followed the best course of action in order to maintain an effective economy and thereby creating work and income for the region. However, the combination of the Spanish keenness to make the tourist happy and in doing so allowing the English language to become a *lingua franca* for the area has now forced the growth of a new ghetto. The use of this word will not be acceptable to some but it is strongly argued that the development of this community follows the definition in that there has been forced segregation resulting in an isolated

⁸⁷ Ibid , 356 referring to studies by K O'Reilly, *The British on the Costa Del Sol: Transnational Identities and Local Communities* .

community driven by influence of the host community by removing an essential “need”. The “need” in this case is the need to speak Spanish.

Influence is demonstrated by the fact that there is little visible encouragement from the general public for the English as a community to learn and speak Spanish. This is validated by the fact that there is now a fully self-supporting English speaking ghetto which has proven that it can function with little intervention from the Spanish community. This influence has now forced the coming together of British residents and tourists as they feel that they belong to that community and it offers a safe and secure environment. The “need” for integration has also been removed from within and influenced from both within and without. The influence from within is shown by the British apathy and ambivalence towards integration and the misguided concept of nationalistic superiority towards their hosts. They have shown that they lack the strength to challenge the dominance imposed by their Spanish hosts and translate this as superiority of the English language in a “post-imperialist” way.

The influence from without comes from economic need manifested through language and the attitude of “us and them”. The Spanish view the British as being temporary, introverted, preferring to stay with their own rather than mixing and that they have no interest in the Spanish, culturally or socially. The British view the Spanish as being distant, not interested in integrating with them, tolerant towards them only because of economic need and prefer that they (the British) stay in their own communities. It is true that the Spanish do not consider the English as being long term and therefore feel that there is no incentive to look for and develop long term relationships. But this is also the same from the British perspective but any solution is hindered by the lack of language learning and consequently the language barrier creates too many hurdles to overcome this problem. However, if there was a more balanced approach to joint facilitation of language integration this situation would undoubtedly change. The British therefore cannot be blamed solely for the development of this situation as the driving factor has come from the Spanish desire for economic development and, some would say, ultimate greed. It is a well established fact that interacting with other people has a positive affect on general well being. The British in general obviously prefer to socialise with other British and are considerably different from other Northern Europeans who are seen to be less selective on their social grouping and include Spanish.⁸⁸ Therefore as they are not

⁸⁸ Rodriguez, Fernandez-Mayoralas, and Rojo, "European Retirees on the Costa Del Sol: A Cross National Comparison," , 193.

expected to integrate the English speaking community have self-imposed their ghetto-like situation. The term “ghetto” may also be replaced by “surrogate community” referring to the underlying surrogacy that exists between the two communities as they both feed off each other and need each other to survive. However, the underlying functions are still the same.

Integration is an important principle of the EU yet there is no guide line as what is acceptable and what is expected of individual citizens. It could be argued that these two communities are integrated in that they co-exist and are so inter-dependant on each other that a change in one community could have drastic effect on the delicate balance of economic function in both communities. Therefore their level of integration should be accepted and allowed to continue as it would be wrong to interfere and upset the balance.

5.4 *Immigrants? No, Tourists.*

The British have a strange post-colonial attitude to immigration. They certainly separate out and clearly label the immigrants in their own country but cannot identify with the same label when they are the immigrants in another country. Their definition of immigrant is obviously different to the standard explanation as they associate the word “immigrant” with a different class of person to themselves. As they belong to the “European” ethnicity and have similar skin colouring, values and come from politically similar States so the term “immigrant” does not apply to them. There is a confused post colonial impression of what an immigrant looks like and how they fit in with society. Further the distinction between an immigrant and a tourist is that the latter will at some stage go home whereas the former is unlikely to leave. Further the tourist tends to be self-supporting where as the immigrant is likely to either be part of the working community or a burden on the State. The British seasonal tourist therefore can lay claim to being “a tourist” whereas the longer term more permanent ex-pat is “an immigrant”. Regardless of the difference in the definition, the outcome of the influx of the British is the same.

The British attitude to foreign settlement is very self-contradictory. In their own country they are quick to vilify migrants who are seen to be “taking over” and becoming too dominant in an area. They are critical of migrant communities that “do not mix and keep to their own kind” and especially critical of those migrants who have been in the country for a long time and do not speak any English. They are incredibly myopic with regard to their own attitude to settlement in large concentrated numbers in Spain and their own low level of integration and

language learning. They are no better and probably worse than some of the migrant communities they criticise back in Britain.

The nationalistic strength of the British with particular regard to their language is one of the reasons that they have not allowed another language to become dominant in any part of England. This does not include Wales and Scotland where their own national language has been “allowed” alongside English. It is also this reason that the English has become so prominent in this area of Spain but this is only due to the high numbers of tourists and ex-pats entering or staying in the *Costa del Sol* at any one time. It would therefore be easy to surmise that if the rate of tourism from Britain had been either less frequent or lower in number, there may well be a different dynamic in existence with regards to language and communication. The British have never been put under pressure to adapt or to change and this is not totally their fault. The Spanish have encouraged this to such an extent that the beast they have been feeding and caring for is so big that it can now look after itself – almost.

So why then do the British follow the same pattern as foreign migrants in their own country and settle in concentrated areas and have limited integration? If this is not acceptable to them in their own country why should it be acceptable for another host country? Is it that because they are European they do not class themselves nor are seen by the Spanish as falling into the category of “different”? Maybe the tolerance and acceptance of so many different cultures in their own country has made the British resilient to the attitudes of their Spanish hosts.

5.5 *Language Learning*

The main points raised by the seasonal tourists in this research were:

- Lessons in Britain were in the winter months (wrong time of year);
- Lessons in Spain were expensive;
- There was no provision for “older learners”;
- There were limited low cost or free lessons available.

The first point is correct and cannot be changed. Lessons from the Local Education Authorities (and Councils) in Britain run during the academic year which is through the winter months. There is then no incentive for the seasonal tourist to attend these classes as they may be able to start but not complete the course as they will be already in Spain. The

research on availability of language lessons in the locality showed that there are plenty of options for learning but there is a cost involved. The average cost of private lessons started at €20 per hour which is not a large amount but in order for language learning to be effective there has to be regular and frequent lessons. This would involve a significant investment for a learner over the period of the winter and this is prohibitive to some of our target group of retirees. Further, the perceived return for the investment of money, time and effort is reduced due to their own self-imposed limitations as they do not feel their ability to learn will justify the cost.

It has been shown that there is no problem with the availability of lessons not only through the private lessons as advertised in the newspapers but also by the number of language schools in the area offering courses. But these courses are considered by the target group as being expensive particularly if it is to be an ongoing investment and the structure of the lessons was deemed more appropriate for younger people. Even though there were courses for older “50 plus” age group the structure of the lessons were directed at those early retirees who were either new to the area or were considering their options. Because there is little incentive to learn or improve on Spanish there is therefore little incentive to spend money on lessons that may well be under utilised or forgotten.

The comment regarding the lack of low cost or free lessons is unfounded as the empirical research has shown that there are such lessons available. Even though these lessons appear well attended our target group did not seem that interested in attending mainly due to their own social activities and apathy. They openly admit that they have been coming to the area for so long that attendance at lessons would, in their mind, not make any difference. In other words, they have given up on learning, not because they do not care, but because they have never needed to in the past, so would find it too difficult now. This target group, because of their age and the fact that they have managed for so long with out the need to speak any Spanish may then be a lost cause. Perhaps emphasis for greater language integration through language learning should be directed at younger and newer retirees.

It has also become apparent from reviewing the EU website on “Life Long Learning” that there is a gap in the provision of language lessons for the older age group. There is a particular area for learning for “adults” but this is for professionals and those in the work place who ultimately need some language to benefit their job prospects or advancement. The

main target area for language learning under the EU banner is specifically directed at the younger age group such as students and those able to, or wanting to, move between Member States. The philosophy of “Life Long Learning” therefore is to start learning young and continue through adult life but starting to learn at a much older age is obviously not considered. This shows that the EU sees learning for younger people and professional adults as being long term benefits for the EU in economic and political terms. As they do not include learning for other sectors of the market i.e. young people who are not students, non-professionals and retired migrants therefore the EU obviously does not consider these sectors of the population as having any long term viability to the wellbeing of the EU as a whole. This is wrong. This gap in the learning market shows that the integration and language learning policies of the EU are selective and not accessible for the common citizen. If the EU was really as keen on the success of the ideals it promotes on the issues of integration, especially through language, then there would be more facilities for those people who fall into the migrant bracket but are outside the student or professional sectors. There seems to be something of a contradiction in philosophy and practice.

The other issues that have come from the discussion on language learning and lessons were that the Spanish always speak in English and so they (the seasonal tourists) would not have any opportunity to improve. This was qualified by the author’s own experience in a number of situations where it was not until there had been persistence did the conversation then turn to Spanish. As discussed, this is not necessarily done intentionally but is something that with a little incentive or education would easily be changed. For instance, the reason that a Spanish waiter (for instance) replies (or leads) the conversation in English is due mainly to time constraints and wanting to provide quality of service to customer. However more significantly there are the following points to consider:

- That there is a common presumption by the seasonal tourist that the Spanish will speak English;
- That there is a common assumption by the Spanish that the seasonal tourist does not speak Spanish;
- There is a common expectation by the tourist that if they instigates a conversation in Spanish the reply will be in English

Unfortunately, these presumptions are all too prevalent and have also been confirmed in instances during the period of research. The reason there is the common presumption that an English tourist would not speak English is two-fold; they have never had the need to learn before and secondly, are not expected to have any language ability. But this presumed lack of ability should not be confused with a lack of interest. On the contrary a number of respondents would be keen to learn if only a little more but only if they were able to practise. Learning should be a two sided experience which assists in the follow through and improvement to be successful.

The Spaniards spoken to about this situation acknowledged that there was this common presumption but the difficulty is that they are unable to tell on first instance whether the English person is able or wanting to use Spanish. A simple request does not mean that they are able to converse. Alternatively, a simple request responded to in Spanish is often met with a blank expression therefore the continuation is lost. Essentially, most people revert to English to be helpful and do not consider that they are hindering any process. Both parties agree that if there was some sort of standardised system that would allow a visual indicator of whether a person was trying to learn Spanish this would make the situation much easier to deal with. Each person would then know if the person was learning and at what level and be able to respond and assist accordingly. This would also reduce misunderstanding, confusion and be a significant lift to self-confidence. But for the present they have to continue with either guess work or presumption.

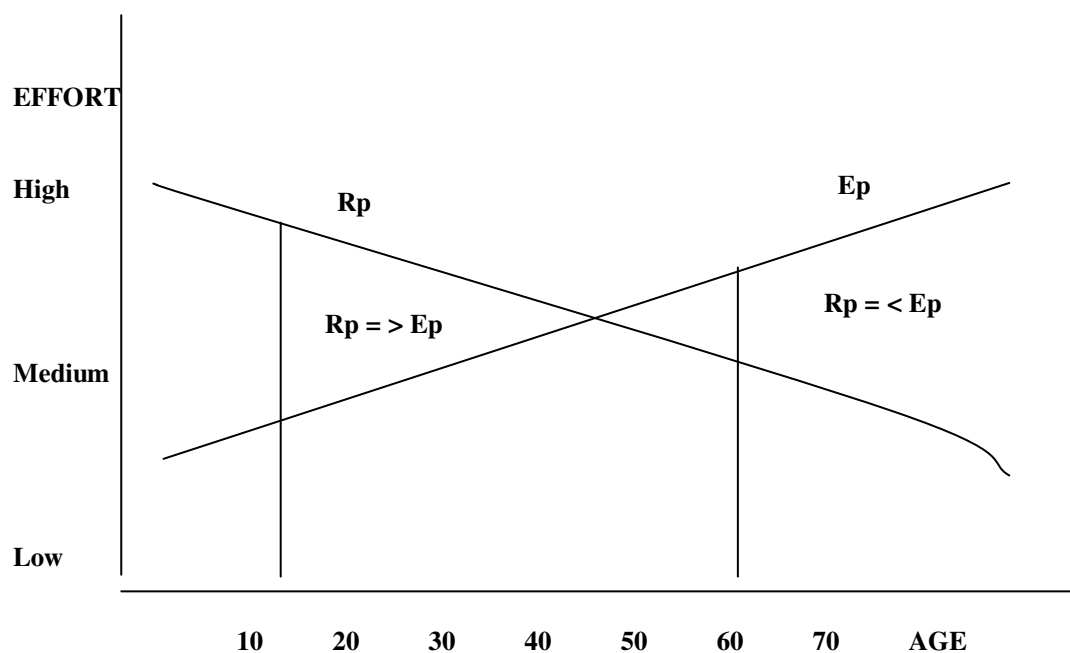
5.6 *Perceived Value of language learning.*

Considering the above conclusions with regard to ability, availability of lessons and seeming lack of interest in taking up these lessons because of cost we should not be quick to criticise and write-off a particular sector of the community that has simply fitted in and continued with what has been considered acceptable. Our target group of retirees are on a fixed income due to pensions and investment savings and are conscious of the return on their expenditure. There has to be a perceived value to the investment they will make in time and money for lessons. In order to ascertain the perceived value of the time and money invested for the target group we also need to consider that there are other important factors that will affect the results apart from the obvious time and cost.

Value (or benefit) is a composite of social, financial, security, status, needs etc. and the value on any of these factors at a given time in someone's life will change. As age increases, the duration of the reward received decreases and also the perceived value at any given time changes. Therefore although the perceived reward on a daily basis may be greater at the age of thirty than at the age of ten, the lifetime value has decreased by twenty years. This does not take into account the subjective judgement of a ten year old on the value of their own learning but instead as if evaluated by a mature third party. The graph in *Table 4/**- shows in diagrammatic form the suggested Perceived Future Reward against Perceived Total Effort. The line for Perceived Total Effort (E_p) rises from low to high in direct correlation with increasing age showing the Perceived Total Effort required to master language if language learning is started at that age. When age increases then so does the Perceived Total Effort in other words the older a person is when they start learning and subsequently mastering another language the harder it may be in comparison to a younger person.

The Perceived Future Reward (R_p) is the perceived value given by that person of a lifetime of learning and using that language when mastered at that age. Consequently the line for the perceived future reward decreases with age. This is on the assumption that the time taken to learn a language increases as we age and the therefore the effort is also greater in magnitude.

At the point where the lines cross, the total perceived effort equals the total perceived reward. After that point, the subject is unlikely to perceive that it is not worth the time and the effort in starting to learn the language. Despite evident rewards to the learner, languages are seen to be more difficult to pick up at an older age. As there is less time left to enjoy the value or the benefits for the older learner there will be distinct drop in the trend as shown on the graph. As our target group have already expressed learning at an older age is more difficult. Whether this is a preconceived social assumption it is not clear however it is a significant barrier to commence learning. But as the graph shows it is not only the age at the start of the learning that is important but the number of years benefit or value that that person will have from the effort exerted at the beginning. Consequently, older people do not see that they will have much return in number of years for their effort. If they are also provided with other options for communication through third parties and it is not a direct threat to their own wellbeing then they will not put language learning high enough up their own social hierarchy of needs.



Rp - Perceived Future Rewards.

Ep - Perceived Total Effort.

Rp = > Ep - Where Perceived Future Reward is **more than** Perceived Total Effort.

Rp = < Ep - Where Perceived Future Reward is **less than** Perceived Total Effort.

Table 4 – Graph showing Perceived Future Rewards and Perceived Future Efforts

5.7 Barriers to Language Learning

We can identify certain clear barriers to language learning in the target group. However there is not one distinct individual barrier but a series of interlinking barriers that contribute to the whole equation.

- *Age*

As already discussed and demonstrated, age is a significant decider in the ability to learn another language – the older a person gets the more of a challenge it becomes and consequently can be perceived as being too hard.

- *Socio-economic*

People from lower socio-economic groups tend to have higher limitations on their education achievement and lower limitations on their own educational and personal aspirations. They are less likely to have opportunities for further education, travel and language learning in earlier life than someone from a higher socio-economic grouping. Therefore they impose a mental barrier on their own abilities when learning another

language. This particular barrier is also interconnected with other barriers such as “sense of belonging”.

- *Exposure to language learning and other languages*

This is also linked to the socio-economic barrier. Where a person has had opportunity to be exposed to other languages either through travel or has had previous language learning experience, they are more likely to attempt to learn another language later in life. The opposite applies where the person has not had those opportunities earlier in life as they do not consider themselves capable.

- *Education*

This is also easily connected to issues with socio-economic background in that due to the reduced financial opportunities there will have been minimal success in their earlier life education which consequently has put psychological limitations in their aspirations. They therefore have an internal preconceived attitude that they lack any ability to learn.

- *Self-Confidence and Fear of Failure*

Confidence to speak in a different language is acquired and nurtured by continuing successes and achievements. If, as it has been shown in the research, that a person's attempts at speaking Spanish is thwarted then they are less likely to try and continue and their confidence will disappear. The encouragement to speak or try to speak is not present. This then changes into a fear of failure as previous attempts have been unsuccessful. A person is unlikely to try and continue without the necessary encouragement and feeling of reward through success however small. We can also link the limitation on self-confidence back to the socio-economic and educational background of a person in the limitations they may have on themselves with regards to their own perceived level of possible achievement. If they do not consider themselves able to learn in an academic sense then they will be unlikely to try due to the fear of failure and lack of self-confidence or self esteem.

- *Spanish always reply in English*

This is a proven statement however there is a serious of presumptions that have developed over the years, some of which are correct. It is a general presumption by the Spanish that the seasonal tourists (or ex-pats in general) cannot speak Spanish and so any conversation will immediately turn to English. To some extent this presumption is correct but it is a self-perpetuating one. The seasonal tourists cite the reason they do not try and learn is that the Spanish always reply in English. This is because they are not

expected to know any but they cannot (or are unwilling to) learn if they are not able to practice and improve therefore the presumption is correct. In order to break this cycle then either the tourist has to become more confident and forceful (but this requires increased learning and confidence) and the Spanish have to be more accommodating and not presume the negative. One cannot be successful without the other.

- *Spanish all speak English*

This statement is not necessarily true. Admittedly there are a large number of Spaniards in the area under study that speak English of varying degrees however there are also a large number who do not. The truth is that the Spaniards that the seasonal tourist is likely to interact with is more likely to speak some English because they work in a tourist area with a concentration of English speaking people. Outside this area the level of language development is probably the same as that of any other European country. Language exposure is higher in a lot of EU countries due to connecting borders and ease of movement for work and schools tend to teach one or two second languages from an early age. Unlike Britain where language learning still seems to be in the dark ages by comparison. Further, there is an economic incentive for the Spanish to learn English particularly as the British seem unwilling to learn Spanish.

- *They pick up languages better than we do*

This is also linked with the general perception that other nationalities (other than British) pick up languages easier than the British. Again, this is not necessarily true except that as many Member States share geographic borders and perhaps have been part of the transnational community longer than the British they have been exposed to other languages more. Further, there are a number of Member States that have more than one national language therefore, acceptance of and ability to learn may be made easier by that exposure.

- *Definition of “Speaking” to high*

It became obvious that the respondents in the target group defined the term “speaking” as being on a level much higher than a simple conversation. They considered being able to put a few words together as being achievable but not in the same category as “speaking” the language. For them someone who could “speak Spanish” was to be fluent and as they considered this a level that they could never achieve therefore in their own perception it was not achievable. Again, this links back to their own experience of language exposure and previous educational achievements and opportunities. But it is as if they have already made up their mind that they cannot achieve therefore they are

unlikely to achieve. However, after some discussion there was consensus of opinion that “communication” was paramount, if only a few words at a time and that with confidence that could be developed into “speaking”. This development would be dependant on most if not all of the above barriers being challenged and ultimately removed.

- *Isolation*

The problem of isolation in the concentrated communities of English speaking residents and seasonal tourists is well reported. Isolation is not just a physical experience but is now a linguistic and psychological one. The barriers to language learning create a feeling of isolation in that the person is unable to remove themselves from the English ghettos as they are unable to communicate with outsiders. Often this is not a problem until, like it has already been shown, there is a problem. The problem has been generated by both sides of the community through economic need and demand and lack of integration. The seasonal tourists rarely experience this problem of isolation as they generally have a large network of friends and social activities and so do not have time to be isolated!

- *Lessons are expensive*

There is a “yes” and “no” answer to this statement. Yes private lessons have shown to be expensive in initial outlay but there are some low cost and free options available. Language schools and private tuition is costly if it an ongoing course and the seasonal tourists do not want to be constantly paying out for lessons for which they may or may not benefit. The lessons may seem expensive if they are not going to benefit the student especially when they are not given the opportunity to use and improve on what they have learnt (see some of the barriers mentioned above). However, lessons would become more economically affordable if the benefit was immediate and ongoing (see below for perceived effort and reward). Further, low cost and free lessons were available but the seasonal tourists did not seem willing to take up this option partly on their own admission that they had more or less given and become apathetic to learning. The other reason was that they were socially too busy!

- *Perceived effort and perceived reward*

This is a significant factor in the barrier to language learning in the older person. If they perceive that the effort that they will have to put into starting to learn a language exceeds the immediate or long term reward then they are less likely to start. It is a given fact that language learning at an older age is much harder particularly if the

person has had little previous language learning or limited educational opportunity. Therefore if it can be shown that the reward in the long term is worth the effort exerted at the beginning then this barrier could be reduced. This idea has to be sold to the up and coming retirees as they will have the advantage of the possibility of longer term rewards and be more likely to be mentally capable of accepting the challenge of learning and able to benefit from their effort.

- *Removal of “Need”*

The historical, political and economic development of this area of Spain has resulted in the removal of the “need” to speak Spanish. Initially, this was a distinct advantage to both sides as the tourists, whether short term, seasonal or ex-at residents did not have the stress factor of having to learn any Spanish to get by. The development of the large concentrated settlements for foreigners of similar nationalities has made the “need” practically non-existent. Therefore there is little incentive or “need” learn the language as integration with their hosts is limited. The higher the concentration or presence of the foreigner in any one area will reduce or remove the “need” to learn or use the local language. On the other side of the fence, the “need” has been removed by the Spanish themselves in order to encourage and promote the attraction of their local area to the tourist. It has been so successful that in some areas Spanish has practically become a secondary language. It is this barrier to language learning that has perhaps being the most significant factor and it was a creation of Spanish economic willingness and British linguistic ignorance.

All things considered we have to agree that the continued existence of these two communities prove that integration through language learning has its obstacles. Some of these obstacles are removable but most of these are so deeply rooted and finely interwoven with the functioning of both communities that to remove them would have extreme detrimental future results. Therefore we have to accept that there are different levels of integration and that we cannot all be “the same” as this would be homogenisation of culture and identity and that would fly in the face of the EU motto and philosophy of “Unity in Diversity”. There are problems that come out of the lack of language learning and resulting limitations to integration however, this is not a quick-fix problem as it involves changing personal attitudes and perceptions so it therefore should be regarded as an example of integration through common need. As long as there is the need to retire in a sunny place and such sunny places are willing to have you there then, all things being equal, it should be allowed to continue.

Ultimately, changes in education, wealth and exposure to languages through travel for subsequent generations of retirees will have some influence on the situation. Therefore it rests with those future retirees to show us if changes to integration can be made, should be made and more importantly will those changes make any difference. Regardless of any discussion on language learning and integration, as long as the sun is shining there will always be a market for the English tourist on the *Costa del Sol*, whether or not they eventually learn to speak the language or eat the food.

POCO A POCO
SPANISH LESSON

By Valerie Mitchell

This week we're going to look at the verb Tener and some of its uses

Tengo Tienes Tiene Tenemos Tienen	means	I have You have He, she or it has We have They have
--	-------	--

So far so good.

Tengo un coche azul Tenemos un libro	means	I have a blue car We have a book
---	-------	---

Put a no in front and it becomes negative

No tengo tiempo	I don't have time
------------------------	--------------------------

And of course, for a question just change the way you say it, to sound like a question.

¿Tienes el periódico? ¿Tienen un perro?	Do you have the newspaper Do they have a dog.
--	--

However there are many other uses for this verb and one of my favourites (not that I'm bossy, of course) is that by simply putting the little word *que* followed by the appropriate verb after it, you change it to mean what one has to do.

Tengo que comprar pan Tienes que estudiar Tiene que ir a Málaga	I have to buy bread You have to study He has to go to Málaga.
--	--

The negative

No tenemos que vender la casa	We don't have to sell the house
--------------------------------------	--

And of course to ask a question, the same as before.

Buena Suerte - Good luck
Hasta la próxima - Until next time

Valerie runs the Centro Idiomas Language School in Coin.
Her books, "The First Twelve Shortcuts to Spanish", "The Second Twelve Shortcuts to Spanish" (€5 each) and "The Verb Book" (€7) are available from The News office in Coin, Woody's Cards and Books in Los Boliches, David's Books in Los Boliches or by email from vjeffrey1@fastmail.fm or call 952 450 747.

Figure 9 - "Poco a Poco"
Sur in English 15 to 21 October 2010.



Figure 10 - Rent a Car Sign
 Note the use of Spanish grammar on the inverted exclamation mark.



Figure 11 - Bi-lingual menu



Figure 12 - "English Pub"



Figure 13 - More "English Pubs"



Figure 14 - Costa Del Sol News and Sur in English
(October 14-21 2010)

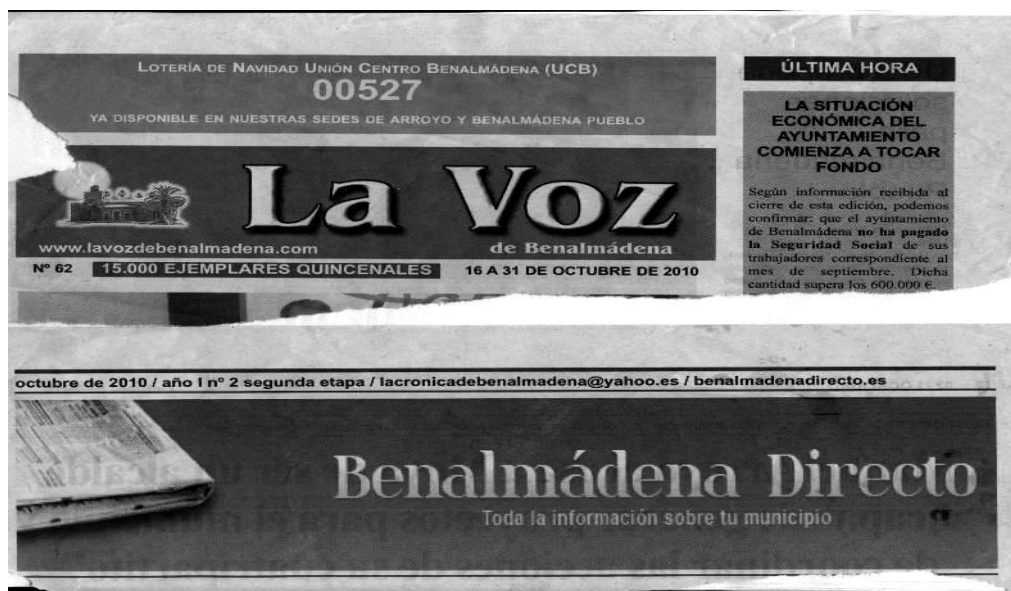


Figure 15 – La Voz and Benalmádena Directo
(October 16 2010)



Figure 16 - Vecinos, The News and EuroWeekly News
(October 14 2010)

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